

2004

Organizations; United Methodist Women; 2004

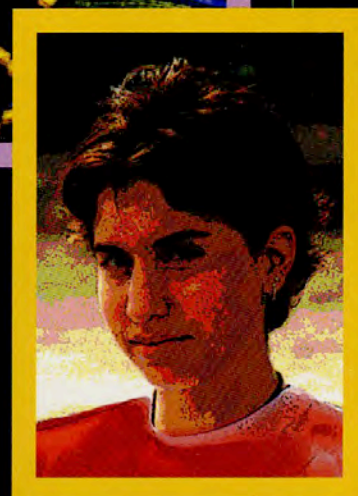
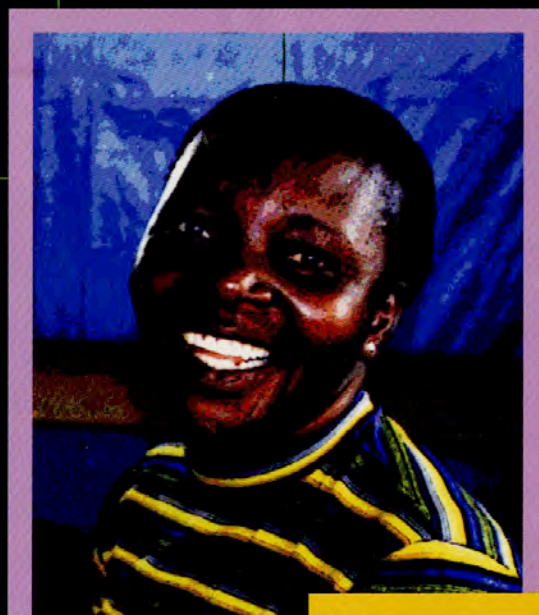
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WHO IS MY SISTER?

2004 • PROGRAM BOOK
FOR UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

WHO IS MY SISTER?

The 2004 Program Book for United Methodist Women

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and Dorcas Rodriguez

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Women's Division
General Board of Global Ministries
The United Methodist Church

Who Is My Sister?

Cover and page 22 design by Hal Sadler based on photos (counterclockwise from center) by: Ray Buchanan, Timothy Gates, and (3) Lane Cotton Winn.

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Photo by Darlene Slack

Introduction

The 2004 Program Book, **Who Is My Sister?**, provides United Methodist Women with opportunities to present programs about mission, about special days, and about other faith-based issues, all focusing on the words of the PURPOSE.

The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose PURPOSE is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

Programs on Study and Meditation, Bible Stories, Mission Encounters, and Special Days help us to focus on the three sections of the PURPOSE, helping us to know God and experience freedom as whole persons, showing us ways to develop creative, supportive fellowship, and at the same time, learning more about mission through the programs related to the mission study themes. Using the programs in **Who Is My Sister?** will offer new insights, times for reflection, and new perspectives on mission, as seen through the PURPOSE by 10 United Methodist Women-related writers. **In addition, the poster for A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial is again included for your use.**

Planning Suggestions

We hope that you will find this Program Book to be inviting, helpful, challenging, and easy to use. Below are some suggestions for planning and doing programs.

1. Read completely through the program several weeks before it is presented. Begin to think

about whether you will use the program as it is written, or adapt it, or divide it for two meetings.

2. Plan ahead! Meet with the group planning the program several weeks in advance. Decide on the purpose, content, and process of the program. Order materials from the Service Center at least six weeks before the event. Also allow enough time for resources ordered from other places to arrive. Ask others to participate in presenting the program at least two weeks before the gathering. Start advertising the program as soon as possible. Give it a title which will attract everyone's interest.

3. Help everyone to be prepared. Be sure each participant has a copy of the complete program, so that she knows how her part fits into the whole. Practice the program as a group beforehand. If this is not possible, ask everyone to practice her own part at home. Practice unfamiliar music or hymns with the group on the day of the presentation.

4. Arrange the meeting room space before the group arrives. In consultation with other leadership, decide how to arrange the chairs, where to put the worship center, displays, and other things which may be needed for the program. Set up audiovisual equipment, if it is to be used, and make sure it is working properly.

5. Be sure to use and refer to United Methodist Women's resources. Take every opportunity to mention *Response* magazine and *New World Outlook*, as well as the three annual mission studies, books from the Reading Program, and other materials.

6. **Keep United Methodist Women's PURPOSE before the group.** Link content of the programs to our PURPOSE and the four mission emphases: Spiritual Growth, Education and Interpretation, Social Action, and Membership Nurture and Outreach. (See *Handbook: Focus on Local and District Units 2001-2004* for more information on the mission emphases.)

7. **Allow time for the group to discuss follow-through or action** related to the program's content. Ask: How can we keep on thinking about this concern? What needs to be done? What can be done?

8. **Use the helpful program planning form** on page 57 of this book. Duplicate it for use by the group that plans the program.

9. **Evaluate the program after it is presented.** Forms are provided in the back of the book that can be sent to the editor of the program book. Please send these in addition to doing an evaluation for your own use.

We pray that you and the members of your unit will be moved and challenged as you follow the program presentations. We hope that you will be inspired to reach out to others as you renew your commitment to mission locally and throughout the world. The organization of United Methodist Women gives many opportunities for us to spread the gospel of God's love to everyone—focusing especially on women, youth, and children.

About the Authors



Ethel Wolfe Born is a former vice president of the Women's Division and is a published author of women's history. *By My Spirit, Methodist Protestant Women in Mission 1879-1939*, and *From Memory to Hope, A Narrative History of the Areas of the World Federation of*

Methodist Women, have been Reading Program selections.

Her interfaith involvement includes serving on the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns where she chaired the task force that developed "Our Muslim Neighbors," the United Methodist statement on Christian-Muslim relations; participating in developing the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA Policy Statement on Interfaith Relations and the Church while a member of its Commission on Interfaith Relations; and representing The United Methodist Church at the Sixth Assembly of the World Conference on Religion and Peace in Rome and Riva del Garda, Italy.

The author of *A Tangled Web, A Search for Answers to the Question of Palestine*, she has been actively involved in education and peace efforts in the Middle East for the past twenty years.

She is a graduate of Mary Baldwin College with an independent major in Religion, Women and Global Issues, and resides in Salem, Va.



Joy Carol is a spiritual director, counselor and author. She leads retreats and workshops on spirituality, healing, care-giving, burnout, prayer, healing for dying, and living life fully, at medical schools, seminaries, retreat centers, churches, and other groups. She is on

the healing ministry teams at St. Luke's School of Healing in Darien, Conn., and at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. Her book, *Towers of Hope: Stories to Help Us Heal*, was recently published by Forest of Peace Publishing in the USA (in Europe as *Finding Courage*). Over the last 35 years, Joy has been a United Methodist missionary, educator (the Outstanding Young Educator of the USA in 1966), a "women in development" specialist, and manager of international development programs. She has lived and worked in the developing world for organizations such as the Ford Foundation, United Nations Development Programmer, Save the Children, and the Christian Children's Fund.

Seven years ago, Joy had three close encounters with death, and has since dedicated her life to spirituality and healing. She holds an honorary doctorate in Humane Letters from Nebraska Wesleyan University, and Master's degrees in Spiritual Direction from the General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church, and in counseling psychology from the University of Maryland. She has also done graduate studies at Scarritt College, New York University and Harvard University. She has been trained in hospice work, grief counseling, death and dying, Christian healing, Reiki, Therapeutic Touch, imagery, and meditation.

Sarah Cunningham is a former editor of program resources for United Methodist Women (1986-1992). Having chosen the church as her vocation, soon after graduation from college in 1947, she began a career of editing church school publications for the Cumberland Presbyterian Church with offices in Nashville, Tenn., where she was a part time student at Scarritt College. Later, she received a master's degree in journalism from Syracuse University, followed by studies in biblical literature and theology in Union Theological Seminary in New York City. From 1960 to 1976, she was editor of *CONCERN*, a magazine for United Presbyterian Women; later, an associate editor of *A.D.*, a publication with monthly editions for both the United Presbyterian Church and the United Church of Christ. In 1988, she edited the Friendship Press book for the Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women, titled *We Belong Together*. She currently lives in New York City, where she occasionally writes or edits materials related to the church. She edited copy for the *2004 Program Book*.



Joyce Hamlin retired from the Women's Division, General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, January, 2002. Prior to that, she served 31 years on the Women's Division staff.

Most recently, Joyce was Executive Secretary for Mission Education. Her responsibilities included coordinating the Reading Program and the Mission Today emphasis. She was also staff contact for Mission Coordinators for Education and Interpretation.

From 1991-1996, Joyce directed the division's long-range planning and provided the staff work for the restructure of United Methodist Women.

Joyce headed the Washington, D.C. Office of the Women's Division from 1970-1991. While there, she led National Legislative Training Events, a series of Political Skills Workshops and encouraged United Methodist Women to

contact their elected representatives on issues affecting women and children, peace and human rights.

Ms. Hamlin attended Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill. where she received a B.A. degree with honors. She earned a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Washington in Seattle, and a law degree from Georgetown University Law Center in Washington, D.C.

Joyce helps coordinate the Evening Circle at Teaneck United Methodist Church, Teaneck, N.J. She enjoys travel, cultural events in New York City, and is a docent at the Newark Museum, Newark, N.J.



Cheryl Hemmerle, a native of Pennsylvania, earned her B. A. in Religion and Psychology from LaGrange College in LaGrange, Georgia, and the Master of Divinity degree from Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta, Ga.

Cheryl is a former member of the executive staff of the Women's Division where she assumed responsibility for the Division's work with teens, college/university, and other young women for six and one-half years. She has worked as a director of Christian education and youth ministry in United Methodist churches in Georgia, South Carolina and New York.

She is currently writing full-time and developing the fine arts of pottery and bookmaking. She enjoys reading, music, cooking, gardening, tennis and hiking.



Sung-ok Lee, as Executive Secretary for Mission Education, coordinates the Mission Today Emphasis, oversees the reading program, and is staff coordinator for education and interpretation. In 1991, she joined the Women's Division as executive assistant to the President and

Deputy General Secretary. She earned a B.A. in

Psychology from Occidental College in California, an M.S.W. from Boston University School of Social Work, and an M.T.S from Boston University School of Theology. Prior to joining the Division, she worked as a clinical social worker and community organizer, and worked for peace and reunification of Korea, her native country. She has directed youth ministries in United Methodist churches in New York, and is an active member of her local church and her United Methodist Women unit.



Marian T. Martin, Executive Director of Gulfside Assembly in Waveland, Miss., is an active Deaconess and retired Diaconal Minister in The United Methodist Church. In 1994, she retired as an Assistant General Secretary from the former Mission Education Cultivation Program Department of the General Board of Global Ministries. While still at GBGM, she accepted a one-year assignment at Gulfside Assembly to restore the historical site and reactivate its programs. That short-term assignment has extended into 14 years, and she continues as Gulfside Assembly's director. Widely-sought as a teacher, she frequently leads Bible studies, particularly on Women in the Bible. Other teaching experiences include public schools, New York Theological Seminary, and Regional and Conference Schools of Christian Mission.

She enjoys working with people with handicapping conditions and teen-aged parents, and has been re-energized by the children and youth being nurtured and cultivated at Gulfside Assembly. She is a life member of both NAACP and Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR), and during Black History Month in 1998, her portrait was included in an exhibit, "Unsung Heroes: by Joseph Pearson" at the George Ohr Cultural Center in Biloxi, Miss. Mrs. Martin is widowed, with four sons and eight grandchildren.



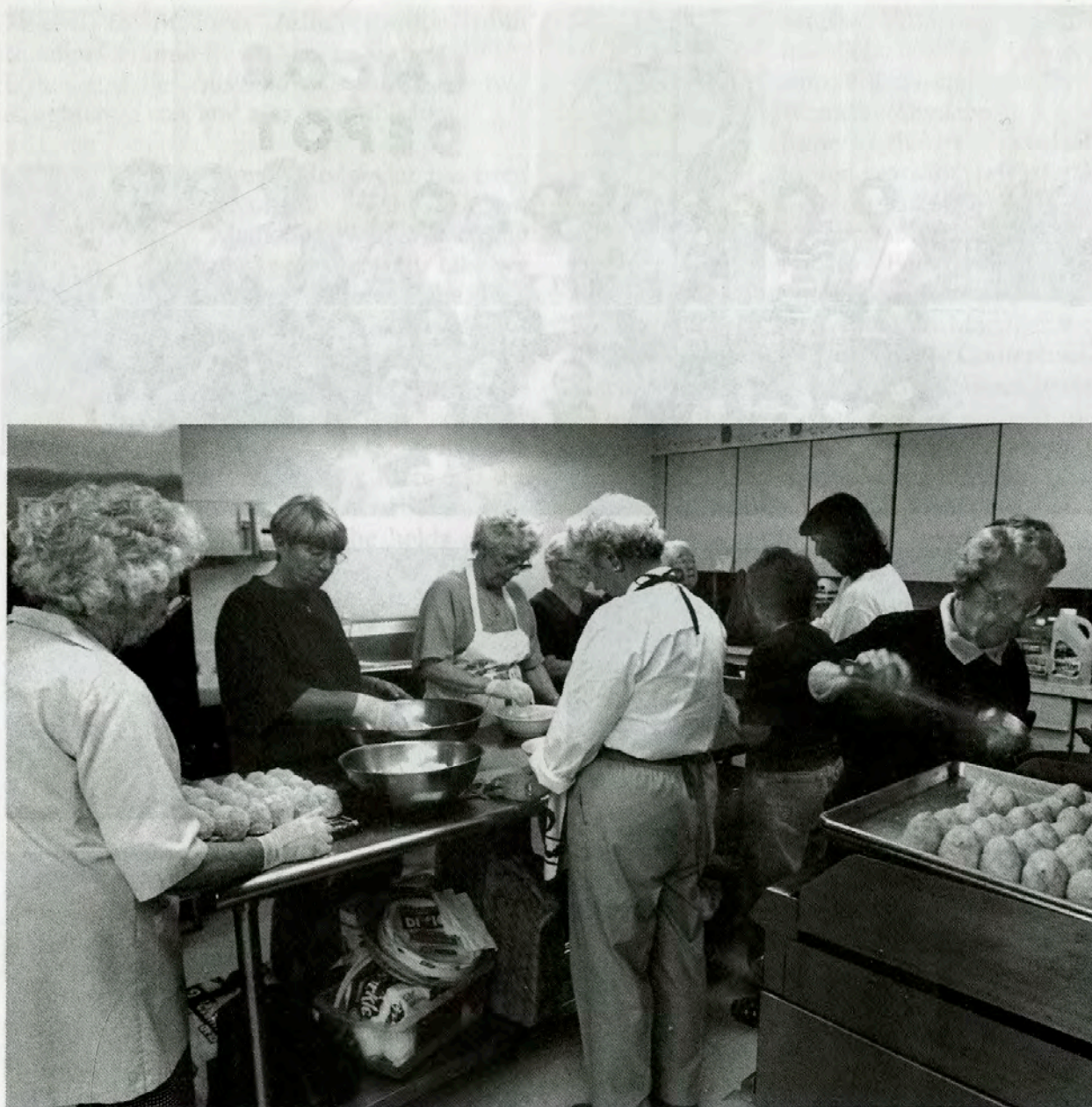
Betty S. Purkey, a native of Morristown, Tenn., is a deaconess in The United Methodist Church. Presently she is Executive Secretary for the Deaconess Program Office, Mission Personnel Program Area, General Board of Global Ministries. She has been employed by

the General Board of Global Ministries since 1970. Most of those years have been spent in the Church and Community Ministry program. Prior to her present position, Betty served as a Church and Community Worker as well as Executive Secretary of the Office of Church and Community. She is a graduate of Hiwassee College in Madisonville, Tenn., and Scarritt College in Nashville, Tenn. Having a strong interest in social justice issues, especially those issues related to rural areas, the environment and the small family farm, Betty has been actively involved in the town and country movement in the Southeastern Jurisdiction and has also served on the National Town And Country Network. In addition, she served for a number of years as member and officer of the Appalachian Development Committee (now known as United Methodist Appalachian Ministry Network).



Diana Rodríguez, a native of Puerto Rico, joined the Women's Division staff of the General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, in 1992. She has served the United Methodist Women and The United Methodist Church in different capacities over the

years. As Executive Secretary for Leadership Education in the Women's Division, she works with the conference mission teams of North Central New York, Western New York, Troy, Central Pennsylvania, Western Pennsylvania, New England, Wyoming, and the Oregon-Idaho Conference on leadership development skills. She holds a B.A. in Education from the University of Puerto Rico, and an Associate



A community of United Methodist Women working together to raise funds for mission.

Photo courtesy of UMW, First UMC, Winchester, Ky.

Study and Meditation

Sisters on PURPOSE

by
Cheryl A. Hemmerle

Focus Scripture: Psalm 68:11: "The Lord gives the command; great is the company of those who bore the tidings."

Focus Image: Provide a worship table containing the Bible (open to Psalm 68:11), a red, green and purple taper candle, each in a holder, a white pillar candle, and a white taper candle for lighting the other candles where

indicated. Display the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women. (See Resources.)

Focus Statement: This program will enable participants to trace the journey of the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women and reaffirm their commitment to fulfill the PURPOSE as members of the organization.

Preparation

Read through the program several times and decide how to make adjustments based upon your group's needs, and the time allotted for the program. In advance, assign speaking parts to members of the unit and secure a song leader and/or musician to accompany the singing. Gather supplies for the "Banner of PURPOSE" activity if you choose to do this during the program. Suggested items for the "Banner of PURPOSE" activity are a poster-board or newsprint, markers, back issues of *Response* and *New World Outlook*, glue stick, scissors, odds and ends of fabric, yarn, and

other items for decorating. Decide upon a symbol or token to offer to those who reaffirm their commitment to fulfill the PURPOSE as members of United Methodist Women. Order membership resources and membership cards (see Resources).

Plan to include a social time following the program in order to strengthen the community of sisterhood that is vital to the PURPOSE of the organization. Decide upon refreshments and enlist the help of others to provide these.

Before the program begins, assemble the worship table. Light only the white pillar candle.

Program

Leader: Welcome to our program on the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women. During our time together, we will explore the journey of our PURPOSE as women organized for mission for over 133 years. We will also take the opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to fulfill the PURPOSE as individual members and as a unit (or circle). Let us pray,

Prayer: As we endeavor to understand our PURPOSE as members of United Methodist Women, we ask your guidance, loving God. Open our eyes and hearts to see and hear what the PURPOSE is truly about: Loving you and our neighbor. Amen.

Song: "O-so-so", #16, or "Wa wa wa emimimo" #64, *Global Praise* 1.

The Journey of the PURPOSE

Leader: How did the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women come into being?

Reader 1: The earliest predecessor organization of United Methodist Women began in 1869 as the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Women responded to God's call to provide education and health care for women and girls in India. From 1869 to 1893, seven other women's missionary societies were established in five other denominations within the Methodist tradition. All of them had similar purposes.

All: The Lord gives the command; great is the company of women who bore the tidings.

Reader 2: The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Protestant Church (1879-1939) stated its purpose in this way: "to unite the women of the Methodist Protestant Church in efforts to promote and extend the organized work of missions, to send missionaries, Bible women and teachers to women and children in heathen lands, and to employ native teachers and Bible women."

All: The Lord gives the command; great is the company of women who bore the tidings.

Reader 3: Mrs. Minerva Strawman Spreng of the Woman's Missionary Society of the Evangelical Association (1884-1922) said, "Our purpose would be:

1. To write the efforts of the women to raise funds for the support of heathen missions;
2. To get women and children interested in the missionary cause so that funds collected may be given in the right spirit and with a willing mind;
3. To unite the earnest prayers of the women of our Association on behalf of the missionary cause;

4. To make it an object to visit the sick;

5. To speak to the unconverted."

All: The Lord gives the command; great is the company of women who bore the tidings.

Reader 4: In 1922, the women's organizations of the Evangelical Association and the United Evangelical Church merged to form the Woman's Missionary Society of the Evangelical Church. A portion of the purpose states, "I believe in the Woman's Missionary Society as one of the most helpful avenues to build the kingdom of God. There is a place for every woman in the Woman's Missionary Society, and I want to help her fill her place."

All: The Lord gives the command; great is the company of women who bore the tidings.

Reader 5: In 1939, five women's mission organizations from the Methodist Episcopal Church, Methodist Protestant Church, and Methodist Episcopal Church, South merged to form the Woman's Society of Christian Service and the Wesleyan Service Guild of the Methodist Church. The stated purpose of the WSCS and Guild was, "to help women grow in the knowledge and experience of God as revealed in Jesus Christ; to challenge them to respond to God's redemptive fellowship; to make Christ known throughout the world; and to develop a personal responsibility for the whole task of the church."

All: The Lord gives the command; great is the company of women who bore the tidings.

Reader 6: In 1946, the Women's Missionary Association of the United Brethren Church (1875) and the Woman's Missionary Society of the Evangelical Church (1922) merged to form the Women's Society of World Service of the Evangelical United Brethren Church. The purpose of this Society was "to unite all the women of the Evangelical United Brethren Church to

make Christ known throughout the world, to deepen the spiritual life of each of its members, to develop a sense of personal responsibility for the whole task of the Church, and to secure funds through systematic means for the maintenance of the missionary work of the Evangelical United Brethren Church."

All: The Lord gives the command; great is the company of women who bore the tidings.

Reader 7: In 1972, The Women's Society of Christian Service and the Wesleyan Service Guild of the United Methodist Church (1968) merged with the Women's Society of World Service of the Evangelical United Brethren Church (1946) to become United Methodist Women. It is this PURPOSE to which we commit ourselves today as women organized for mission.

All: The Lord gives the command; great is the company of women who bore the tidings.

Leader: Join me in reciting the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women.

All: The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose PURPOSE is to know God, and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

Activity: Banner of PURPOSE

If the group is more than seven, divide into four groups and assign each group one of the four goals of the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women, 1) to know God, 2) to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ, 3) to develop a creative, supportive fellowship, and 4) to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church. Give each group a shopping bag of supplies and instruct them to create a banner of their portion of the PURPOSE, using only the items in their bag. When the groups are finished, or when you call time, have them display their banners and share briefly what they have created to depict their

portion of the PURPOSE. If your group is seven or fewer, have the entire group work together on one complete PURPOSE banner using the supplies you furnish. When the group is finished, or when you call time, have them display the banner and each share briefly what has been created to depict the PURPOSE. Play music while everyone is working on the banner(s) and encourage them to talk freely with one another about the PURPOSE as well as the purpose of their own lives. Suggest that they discuss who they are, whom they are becoming, and who they hope to be. Have them share together what makes meaning in their lives and how they see themselves fulfilling God's purpose.

After each group has shared, display the banners around the worship table. Continue with the rest of the program.

Hymn: "This Is a Day of New Beginnings," #383, *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

A Service of Commitment and Celebration

Leader: The candles on our worship table represent, by color, the work of fulfilling our PURPOSE as members of United Methodist Women. They will be lighted now as we reaffirm our membership in United Methodist Women and recommit ourselves to fulfilling our common PURPOSE as women organized for mission.

Reader 1: Three candles stand awaiting light from my own hand. The first is green, hue of God's out-of-doors. It challenges us to pray for missions here and far away. And so I light a tiny flame, and pray for missions in God's name.

(Reader 1 takes the unlighted, white taper candle from the worship table, lights it from the white pillar candle, and lights the green taper candle. She then extinguishes the white taper candle and puts it back on the worship table.)

All: Stir into flame, O God, your gifts within us.

Reader 2: The organization of United Methodist Women seeks to be a community of women, a community that is worldwide. As members, we

seek to know God and experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ. We want this freedom for ourselves and for women, children and youth around the world. We support the ministries of the church with our prayers so that all may know God and God's love for all humankind.

Leader: The green candle is lighted as we commit ourselves to fulfill the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women through prayer.

Reader 3: Three candles stand awaiting light from my own hand. The second is red as rays of setting sun; the color of the blood Christ shed for me. For me he died; for others must I live, since Christ has set me free. And so this candle burns for all humanity.

(Reader 3 takes the unlighted white taper candle from the worship table and lights it from the white pillar candle. She then lights the red taper candle and extinguishes the white taper candle, placing it back on the worship table.)

All: Stir into flame, O God, your gifts within us.

Reader 4: Our personality encompasses all of life: eating, sleeping, time with family and friends, our private moments, time at church, and the things we do for others. Each member of United Methodist Women gives her time, her talents, creativity, and energies to fulfill the PURPOSE. Together, our individual personalities unite to create a caring community and supportive bonds with one another. It is this community that makes mission possible.

Leader: The red candle is lighted to symbolize our commitment to fulfill the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women. Through our individual, unique personalities, by who we are and what we do, we experience a creative, supportive fellowship.

Reader 5: Three candles stand, awaiting light from my own hand. The third is purple, like the royal robes of kings. It is a symbol of material things. I give it light and bring unto God my sil-

ver and my gold, that all the wondrous story may be told.

(Reader 5 takes the unlighted white taper candle from the worship table, lights it from the white pillar candle, and lights the purple taper candle. She then extinguishes the white taper candle and puts it back on the worship table.)

All: Stir into flame, O God, your gifts within us.

Reader 6: In 1869, members of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, our earliest missionary society, were eager to send Isabella Thoburn, an educator, and Clara Swain, a doctor, to India as missionaries to women and girls. They had no money so they declared their willingness to "walk the streets of Boston in calico" (rather than purchase more expensive fabrics) if that was the only way to get the needed money. They were determined to fulfill their purpose as women organized for mission by sacrificing their possessions. As members of United Methodist Women, we continue to use creative ways to raise money for mission. We give freely and sacrificially of that which God has given to us.

Leader: The purple candle is lighted to symbolize our commitment to fulfilling the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women by freely offering our possessions, so that we may expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

Song: "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light," #206, *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Leader: Women organized for mission from eight predecessor organizations and six denominations have given tirelessly of themselves through prayer, personality and possessions in response to God's call. Together, we have shared billions of dollars in financial and material resources to aid women, children and youth in the United States and more than 100 countries worldwide. Today, we accept God's call to continue this legacy of women organized for mission and join together in fulfilling the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women. Let us reaffirm

our commitment as members of United Methodist Women.

Will you, as a member of the organization of United Methodist Women, faithfully fulfill the PURPOSE?

All: With God's help, I will.

Leader: In your daily life, will you make it your intention to know God?

All: With God's help, I will.

Leader: For yourself and for others, will you make it your intention to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ?

All: With God's help, I will.

Leader: Whenever we gather as members of United Methodist Women, will you make it your intention to develop a creative, supportive community?

All: With God's help, I will.

Leader: Through every opportunity available to you, will you make it your intention to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church?

All: With God's help, I will.

Leader: Let everyone who is able stand and form a circle, joining hands.

You have proclaimed your intentions to fulfill faithfully the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women. Your pledge is an outgrowth of your commitment to Jesus Christ and a renewal of your desire to follow his teachings to love and to serve others. Let us pledge our support to each other as sisters to walk together along this journey. May God who has created us, Jesus Christ who has redeemed us, and the Holy Spirit who sustains and empowers us, bless us as we journey toward fulfilling God's mission through the organization of United Methodist Women. Amen.

At this point, the leader may share with each member a token or symbol of reaffirma-

tion to fulfill the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women. Suggestions would be a membership card or membership pin (see Resources) or another tangible item of your choosing. As the token or symbol is shared with each member, the leader may say something like the following:

"My sister(s), do not be afraid to attempt big things for God. Be faithful and keep at it!"

After you have shared the token or symbol with each member, encourage everyone to share signs of God's peace with each other as they return to their seats.

Song: "Many Gifts, One Spirit" #114, *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Prayer

Leader: Let us pray. Ever-living God, we pray for this, your community of women organized for mission. We ask that every member may be freed to serve you in truth and grace. We remember all women who have recognized that to be a person of faith is to respond in action.

All: We give you thanks, O God.

Leader: We remember all women who have faced the unknown in faith and met fear with courage. We give thanks for all women who dare to step forward and lead; for all women who have challenged the stereotypes of society and risked standing alone.

All: We give you thanks, O God.

Leader: We remember women who have struggled to reform our history, who have sought in their time to minister to the needs of the hurt, the disadvantaged and the alienated in our world.

All: We give you thanks, O God.

Leader: We remember our foremothers in the faith and in this organization, purposeful women like Lizzie Johnson, Lizzie Hoffman, Hester Williams, Justina Showers, and

Minerva Strawman Spreng, who labored in the struggle before us.

All: We give you thanks, O God.

Leader: Make us worthy to inherit their valor and vision. Challenge us so that we do not wither and perish by holding to the familiar when it has lost its savor. As your daughters, may we be brought nearer to a new

vision of your love, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Song: "Guide My Feet," #68, *Global Praise I*.

A concluding social time with refreshments can strengthen the community of sisterhood that is vital to the PURPOSE of the organization.

Resources*

Emblem of United Methodist Women. (#01440) large (1½ x 2½ inches), 20 seals per package, \$2.50. Or (#01439) small (¾ x 1¼ inches), 20 seals per package, \$1.50.

Global Praise 1. Songs from around the world and many regions of Methodism, from diverse cultures and languages that everyone can sing. (#02572) \$6.95.

Invitation to Membership. An attractively designed, helpful brochure to introduce the organization of United Methodist Women to prospective members. Eng. (#05365), Span. (#05378) free except for postage and handling.

Membership Joys and Responsibilities. A brochure that includes pledge to mission and membership cards, the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women, and a subscription form for *Response* magazine. Eng. (#05513), Span. (#05514), Kor. (#05525) free except for postage and handling.

Membership Pin. (#03832) gold plate or (#03833) silver plate \$6.50.

One Million Plus! A colorful leaflet which describes United Methodist Women as a community that is unique, faithful, purposeful, supportive, global, and responsive to its PURPOSE. (#05091) free except for postage and handling.

PURPOSE of United Methodist Women Poster. Words of the PURPOSE are enlarged and combined with the bright emblem of United Methodist Women on a 22 x 34-inch poster. Available in Spanish and Korean, too. (#04421) \$1.50, two or more, \$1.35 each.

United Methodist Women in Mission. Designed with brilliant sunburst colors, this booklet includes the Biblical basis for our long heritage in mission. (#02139) 25¢.

What's the PURPOSE? A six-session program guide to understanding and exploring the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women. Designed for use with teens and college/university women but useful with any age group. (#02913) \$3.50.

*Resources listed with stock numbers are available from the Service Center, General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 7820 Reading Road, Callers No. 1800, Cincinnati, OH 45222-1800. Telephone: 1-800-305-9857; Fax: 1-513-761-3722; E-mail: SCorders@gbgm-umc.org. Prices do not include shipping and handling. See inside back cover for information on how to figure these additional costs.



Seeds for Needy Families, a project developed by United Methodist Women in Columbia Station, Ohio.



Photo by Lane Cotton White

Power of love shining through the risen Jesus, shine in the dark places of pain and suffering in my life and in the lives of everyone.

Study and Meditation

Soul Knitting

by
Joy Carol

Focus Image: Cover a table with a cloth or scarf. On the table place a number of different colored candles along with a basket of different colored 36-inch strips of yarn.

Focus Scripture: Habakkuk 2:20: "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him!" and Psalm 46:10: "Be still, and know that I am God!"

Focus Statement: Jesus went to the desert, the seaside and the garden to be with God. Often

he invited his disciples to go with him: "Let us go off by ourselves to some place where we will be alone." (See Mark 6:31). We are not always aware of our need for silence. We may not be accustomed to being quiet and may find our minds wandering or our hearts full of emotional turmoil. Often silent meditation can be practiced fruitfully in a group. When we are still and listen to God's voice, many things may be revealed to us about ourselves, our connectedness to God, and to others in the world.

Program

Opening Praise Song: "Be Still, My Soul," Stanzas 1 and 2, #534 *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Reader: Reads Focus Scripture aloud.

Leader: Reads Focus Statement aloud.

Prayer

All: O God, we come to you with noisy minds, troubled hearts, busy lives. We confess we have many fears and at times, feel inadequate to deal with the challenges we face. But we, your children, come to you now to try to be still and know that you are our God. Help us to listen to you and to others, to feel our connectedness to you, to each other, and to all your children throughout the world. O God, fill us with your peace, your breath of life. Amen.

Leader: As we pass the basket around, please take a piece of yarn.

Voices from the Community:

First Voice: Jesus said that we should be alert and stay awake to God's presence in the world. (Mark 13:33)

Second Voice: In Isaiah we are told that we belong to God, that God calls each one of us by name. (Isaiah 43:1)

Third Voice: But are our lives too noisy, too busy to hear our name called? Do we have time to hear the voice of God? Or of our neighbors?

Leader: Let's take a few minutes to form small groups of three or four. Find two or three people who have a piece of yarn of a different color than yours. When your group is together, talk briefly about your efforts to be silent. What happens when you are quiet? What happens when you listen carefully to others?

(Ring the bell after 5 or 6 minutes.)

We can learn to recognize the presence and action of God around us. But we need to slow down and be quiet to do that. Take a few minutes to discuss in your small group what steps you want to take that might help you slow down, be still, and "knit" God's presence into your soul. After each person speaks, she should tie one end of her string of yarn to that of the next person to speak. After every person in your group has spoken, you will have one circle of yarn made of different colors.

(Ring the bell after 5 or 6 minutes. Have the groups share what they learned.)

Voices from the Community:

First Voice: If we take time to pay attention to the sacred in our lives, we may discover a depth to life that might have gone unnoticed. This has the power to transform us, to draw us closer to God, to make us more sensitive to the needs of the world, to give us strength to undertake actions of compassion and service.

Second Voice: We believe that the Spirit is at work and speaks to us wherever two or three are gathered together. This belief can guide our personal lives, and the life of the church,

and can remind us how much God cares about the entire world. This planet and all the people on it are God's gifts. We have been entrusted to be responsible and caring people with God's treasures.

Third Voice: Today we focus on the meditation of soul knitting. There are many benefits of practicing listening skills as well as of being silent. Sometimes it is easier to achieve concentration within a group. Some benefits we may find are an increase of love among the members and a greater union of hearts through sharing and prayer. Silent meditation has the power to unite us to God, to each other and to our sisters and brothers throughout the planet.

Leader: We are going to practice a guided meditation. Before we begin, tie the end of your group's circle of yarn to the group's circle of yarn on your left until we have one circle of yarn knitting all our souls together. We may have to come closer together as we tie our circles together.

Reader: Revelation 3:20: "Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you."

Meditation

Leader: *(Ring the bell. Pause for 10-15 seconds before reading each paragraph.)*

- Rest and relax your body in whatever way feels comfortable to you. Take a few deep breaths. Then let your breath be light and normal.
- When you feel ready, think of the body of the earth enfolded in God's warm light, which wraps around the earth.
- Inside your head, say words such as: "Love of God, you surround this earth with light."
- Think of that warm, healing light from the heart of God, not only enfolding the body of the earth but streaming through it, filling

every part of the planet with healing light.

- As you gently, quietly breathe, think of God through Jesus the Christ breathing upon all the people of the earth.
- Think of every person breathing in God's breath, deeply and slowly.
- Think of each person's pain flowing into the hands and heart of God who holds the earth.
- Understand that you are a part of the people of the earth, that we are all knitted together with our pain and our joys in a huge tapestry of life.
- Inside your heart, say something like:

"Power of love shining through the risen Jesus, shine in the dark places of pain and suffering in my life and in the lives of everyone in this room and throughout the world."

- Picture how the light from God's heart gently touches and embraces your heart and all the hearts of the world.
- Let your heart rest in the safety of God's touch and feel the reality of God's love.
- Quietly breathe and give thanks.
- When you feel ready, come slowly forth from your meditation. Give yourself a moment before re-entering our interaction with each other.

Leader: *(Ring the bell. If there is time, invite members to share with the group their thoughts about the experience of the meditation.)*

(Pass out 3 x 5 inch cards to everyone. As people are writing on their cards, pass out several pairs of scissors and tell people to cut a section of the big circle of yarn to take home. Be sure every person gets a tied knot so they have two colors of yarn tied together.)

(Say to the Group:) Write on your card your commitment to being still for a few minutes every day or every week. Keep this multi-colored yarn with your card as a reminder that our souls are knitted together with each other and with God.

Closing Worship

Hymn: "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence," Stanza 1, # 626, *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Leader: As we listen and are open to God's presence in our lives, the quality of our respect for and presence to others deepens.

All: Lord, as we leave, we commit ourselves to being still. Help us to listen closely with every fiber of our being so that we do not pass you by without even noticing. Help us to listen carefully to ourselves and others, so that we can learn to love ourselves and one another. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Preparation

1. Create the worship center with colored candles of various sizes. Using 4 different colors of yarn (or embroidery thread), cut enough 36-inch strips of yarn so that each person will have one 36-inch strip. Put the strips in a basket on the worship center table.
2. Have several pairs of scissors, 3X5 inch cards, and pens available for the commitment ceremony.
3. Provide a small bell for the leader to ring gently as suggested.
4. Assign persons to be the Leader, the Reader of Scripture, and Readers 1-3.
5. Make copies of the Program and Closing Worship for everyone.

Resources

Driskill, Joseph D., *Protestant Spiritual Exercises: Theology, History and Practice*. Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, 1999.

De Mello, Anthony, *Sadhana, A Way to God*:

Christian Exercises in Eastern Form. New York: Image Books/Doubleday, 1978.

Main, John, *Moment of Christ: The Path of Meditation*. New York: Continuum, 1998.



Photo by Lesley Crosson

The Hill of Crosses in Lithuania was dedicated in 1831 with hundreds of crosses to honor the dead after the 1831 rebellion against Czarist Russia.

Bible Study

Lent/Easter—The Women Looked on— from a Distance: A Reflection on the Cross

by
Sarah Cunningham

Focus Image: On a table, covered with a dark (perhaps velvet or felt) cloth, place a selection of crosses. You might borrow the one used regularly in your church's Sunday services, and add to it examples of crosses symbolizing different traditions—Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, American Protestant. Ask members of your circle who have crosses as symbols to be worn or religious art, to bring or wear them. (See the section titled "Preparation" for further information about types of crosses.) Plan on using a combination of one or more free-standing crosses, plus others to be worn or displayed as works of art.

If space allows, on the table, place a copy of *The United Methodist Hymnal*, open to the section titled "Christ's Gracious Life: Passion and Death," Hymn #298, "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"; and a copy of the Bible, open to one of the scripture readings listed.

Focus Scripture: The story of the crucifixion as told by Mark, Luke, Matthew and John. Read in this order: Mark 15:21-47. Luke 23:49; 55-56. Matthew 27: 55-61, and John 19:25-30.

Focus Statement. There is probably no greater pain for a woman than that symbolized by the women who stood by, at Jesus' crucifixion. Women bring forth life. To watch life destroyed by cruel mutilation and against one's will is to suffer the ultimate inhumanity. Yet, the cross, symbol of just such inhumanity, has become the dominant symbol for Christ and the Church. In this program we will examine the question the cross presents to us in the 21st century. If we were to choose a symbol for Christ and the Church that would speak to us as women in these times, would we choose the cross?

Program

Leader: Today we will reflect on Jesus' crucifixion, asking what it says to us about the women who were present, and what their presence there might be saying to us, now. We will try to imagine some conversations they might have had with one another after Jesus' death. We will also have conversations of our own about the cross and why it has become the dominant symbol of the church.

As selections of scripture are read from the four gospels, listen carefully to each reading, paying particular attention to the way each speaks of the women who were present at the

crucifixion. The first reading is from Mark (perhaps the earliest of the gospel writings). It is the longest, describing Jesus' journey as he was led by the Roman soldiers from Pilate's courtyard to the place of crucifixion. Toward the end of the reading we will hear what seems almost like an afterthought: "There were also women looking on from a distance."

Reader 1: Mark 15:21-47.
Reader 2: Luke 23:49 and 55-56.
Reader 3: Matthew 27:55-61.
Reader 4: John 19:25-30.

Hymn: "Were You There," #288, *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Activity:

1. At this point, the leader might invite the group to walk around the table where the crosses are displayed, spending a few minutes examining their shapes and thinking about their meaning. You may want to do this as you sing stanzas of the hymn, "Were You There."

(An alternative plan would be to invite members of your group to examine the crosses as they gather, before the formal program begins.)

2. Divide the circle into small discussion groups of six or fewer. Or if your total group is not more than ten, divide into two groups of five, or stay together as one group and talk. The leader's role will be to guide the group in their discussion.

Leader: Reflect on the women who were at the cross. Do you recall the names? There were several Marys. Do you recall what the scriptures said about them? (At this point, the scripture readers might be helpful in reminding the group.) Try to imagine the women talking among themselves as they waited for Jesus to be taken down from the cross, and as they followed Joseph of Arimathea to the place

More to a Woman's Liking

Leader: Several years ago, Delores Williams, a professor at Union Theological Seminary in New York, suggested that for many reasons, other symbols might be more useful and redemptive for Christians and the church in our time than the cross.

Being African American, she wrote of the negative and frightening effect the cross has played in acts of racism, destruction, vandalism, and murder in black communities across this country. Not too long ago, Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas echoed the same observation.

Others have pointed out that the cross is not

where his body was laid. What do you think they might have been saying to each other? Imagine the women talking of how they would like Jesus remembered. What symbols do you think they might have suggested?

(Allow about five minutes for this conversation, reminding the group if necessary that Jesus was often referred to as teacher (rabbi), the good shepherd, the elder brother, the anointed one. The early church referred to him as the suffering servant, the light of the world, word of God, prince of peace. With a little thought, other images will occur to you.)

Now, let us reflect on the various types of crosses that have become symbols used in church architecture or design, and worn by clergy in liturgical ceremonies. *(At this point, share with the group the brief descriptions of the various crosses given in the Preparation section.)*

Does any one design appeal to you more than others? Can you explain why? Do you think the cross, as symbol for Christ and the Church, has played as prominent a role in the Protestant church's life as among Catholics or Orthodox Christians? Does church history offer some clues as to why this is so?

(Allow another five or ten minutes for this discussion, either in small groups or in the group as a whole.)

easily the choice of women of any race or nationality because it is women who are the bearers of life. In addition to carrying their own child in the womb, women spend much of their lives nurturing life, in theirs and others' offspring. To women, perhaps many other symbols would be much more to their liking than the cross as a symbol of crucifixion and death.

Activity

Leader: We will now listen as four different images of Jesus and his followers are presented from New Testament readings. *(Use four different readers for the following):*

1. The Vine and the Branches: John 15:1-4.
2. The Lamb of God: John 1:35-36.
3. The True Light: John 1:9-10.
4. The Bread and Cup: Matthew 26:26-28; I Corinthians 10:16,17.

Leader: Other symbols were also used by the early church, such as a simple drawing of a fish as a sign for the gathered community. The lamp, a boat (recall the symbol used by the World Council of Churches), a bowl of water (symbolizing baptism or the symbolic washing of the body), all have been used as symbols for Christ and the Church. What appeals to you? Do you think of others? Can we be more intentional about using all these symbols? *(Allow a few minutes for general response from the group.)*

Beyond the Shadow

Leader: We are now again in a time of uncertainty about our faithfulness to the church's mission. Perhaps the cross does come center stage again, almost as a warning, a foreboding, a fear that death is the motif of our time.

As we remember the early post-crucifixion stories, we recall that the cross became central in New Testament times as a way of speaking of the significance of Jesus' life and death, and of the mission of the church.

In Matthew 16, Jesus begins to ask the disciples, "Who do the people say that I am, and who do you say that I am?" Peter responds, "You are the Messiah." Later Jesus is reported to have talked about his impending death and he tells the disciples, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." (See Matthew 16:13-24.)

Paul would speak often of the cross as would other New Testament writers.

However, by the fourth century C.E. (Common Era), the cross was to become the symbol of power and subjugation. The Roman Emperor Constantine would claim that he had seen in the sky a flaming cross and the message, "In this sign, thou shalt conquer." Again in the eleventh

Yet, over the centuries, as artists and aesthetic mystics have grappled with the symbol of the cross, the urge to make it a concept of universal wholeness, as a way of healing universal brokenness, resulted in the various crosses mentioned in the focus image. The Celtic Cross that emerged out of the Irish tradition, with the circle surrounding the cross, seems to have been a deliberate effort to reflect wholeness, and inclusiveness enfolding the cross. The Jerusalem Cross with equal horizontal and vertical bars, decorated with smaller crosses in each corner of space, represents a unity of many parts. The Byzantine cross, much like the Roman cross but with softened edges, like flower petals, has an artistic appeal that makers of jewelry especially seem to like.

century, the Crusaders (wearing the sign of the cross) set out to destroy those they considered the "infidels," including Jews in Eastern Europe and Muslims in "the Holy Land."

For Protestants, after the Reformation of the 16th century, and on the American frontier into the 18th and 19th centuries, the open Bible on the pulpit was often the preferred symbol of the gospel and the church, though "the old rugged cross," that severe American cross of two simple beams of wood, was the cross often erected for Easter services.

Only as Protestant churches began to take church history seriously and explore the many traditions of Christianity did a fascination with the cross in all its variations begin to affect the art and architecture of the American church in general.

But always, there was that "shadow" side of the cross. The burning cross became the symbol of the Ku Klux Klan and the violent racism that swept this country right after the Civil War, not to be totally obliterated even to this day. And in Europe, the period of the Nazis brought forth that strange configuration of the cross called the Swastika, as symbol for the destruction of the Jews and others considered alien to Hitler's definition of an "acceptable" race and culture.

The association of the cross with warfare and violence has stalked its history from the earliest days of the church. As the cross began to be associated more and more with a kind of aggressive conquering spirit, it took on the mantle of power and subjugation. Today, we often simply accept it as the symbol for the church, but some are asking, is it time to think of other symbols and if we had given more emphasis to other symbols, would it have affected the way we behave as Christians?

Do we need dialogue between Christians and those who have been "scapegoated" by Christian societies? Should we repent of the violence the cross has been used to justify?

On the other hand, is the cross a symbol too ingrained with meaning and identity to be laid aside? If so, how can we begin to rethink its meaning as Christ's ultimate loyalty to a calling,

instead of its use as a sign of power, and victory over others? Most importantly, can we restore the image of the cross as a symbol of sacrifice for the sake of all, not as a symbol of the power of Christians over others?

A Time of Silent Prayer: Let us each pray silently for wisdom, for a discerning spirit, for a true understanding of the role of the cross in Christian worship.

Hymn: "The Church of Christ in Every Age," #589, *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Benediction

May we go forth in peace.

May the grace of Jesus, the Christ

and the love of God

and the communion of the Holy Spirit

be with us all. Amen.

Preparation

Read the scripture passages in advance and assign a reader for each. Be sure that all those who are to read during the program have Bibles or copies of the passages they are to read. Check with other members of the circle to find a collection of crosses for the Focus Image. Look for examples of:

- The Latin Cross (based on the cross used by Roman soldiers for Jesus' crucifixion, the vertical bar longer than the horizontal one.)
- The Byzantine Cross, basically the same but with edges designed like flower petals (the French fleurs de lis).
- The Greek Cross, vertical and horizontal bars equal in length.
- The Jerusalem Cross, a variation of the Greek Cross.
- The Celtic Cross, based on the Latin Cross, but with a circle at the intersection of the vertical and horizontal bars.

- St. Andrew's Cross, shaped like an X.

In advance, encourage members to talk about the meaning of the cross with their friends and neighbors who may be Catholic or Orthodox. Also, talk with Jewish neighbors and Muslim neighbors. Find out how they feel about the cross as a symbol. Have they experienced it in positive or negative ways?

Arrange the meeting space so that all participants have easy access to the center of worship (the focus table) and so that individual readers or speakers may easily be seen by the total group when they read their parts, either sitting or standing. The leader may plan to present the major sections, breaking them up with discussions among members of the group; or different sections can be assigned to different speakers.

If you plan to sing, be sure you have a pianist present, and hymnals for everyone.

Resources

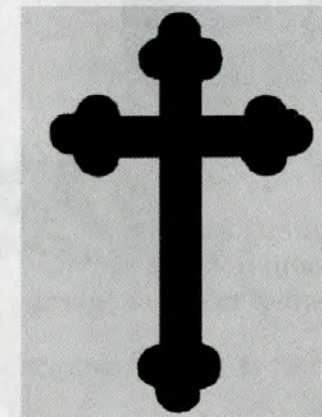
"The Cross: Should a Symbol Betrayed Be Reclaimed?" by Mary C. Boys, *Cross Currents*, the Journal of the Association for Religion and Intellectual Life, Spring, 1944, pages 5-23. A scholarly, yet very personal examination of the question of the cross. The author, member of a Roman Catholic order and professor at Union Theological Seminary in New York City, writes, "So it is from my earliest days to my final end that I am marked with the sign of the cross. It is a symbol in my bone marrow." She also writes, "The scandal of the cross consists in this: Christians in their history have made it a sign of conquering hate rather than sacrificial love. It is now time to ask whether the cross itself can be redeemed." Her essay is an examination of the history of the church's misuse of the cross, and she closes her thesis by writing: "The story I have

traced serves to remind Christians of their betrayal of Jesus, the Jew from Nazareth, and their defilement of the symbol of his suffering.... Like all symbols, the cross evokes more than one can explain. It condenses death and life into one symbol. It enfolds some of the deepest fears of humanity—vulnerability, betrayal, pain, forsakenness—and transfigures them into expressions of hope.... The cross is a symbol Christians have been given to image their hope that God is with them, even in pain and tragedy and ambiguity. It is a symbol of the ... faith that pouring out one's life for the sake of another brings new life."

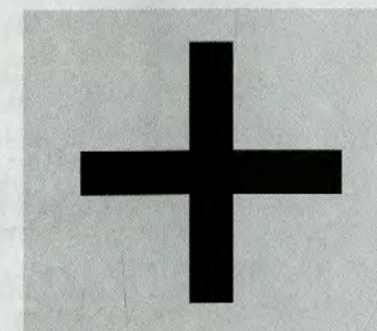
Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Tenth Edition, 1993 contains under the definition of Cross, illustrations of various types of crosses.



The Latin Cross



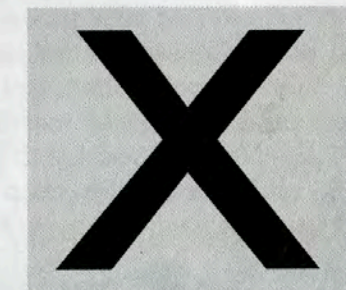
The Byzantine Cross



The Greek Cross



The Celtic Cross



The St. Andrew's Cross



Photo from GRGM

Bible Study Advent/Christmas—Tell the Coming Generations

by
Diana Rodríguez and Dorcas Rodríguez

Focus Image: Form a worship center by covering a table with a colorful cloth and placing on it a Bible, a nativity scene, posada bags (see "Preparation"), and a Bible story book.

Focus Scripture: Psalm 78:1-4; Luke 2:36-38; Psalm 71:17-18.

Focus Statement: Throughout history, women have been the storytellers for their people. They carry the history of their families, passing on the stories to their descendants. It is their way of remembering the past and guid-

ing future generations. Women are also the nurturers. They know their families and the people of their community. They give them a listening ear, supporting them in their needs. They are counselors, helping others to bring out their inner strength. They are mentors. They are the encouraging presence that makes a difference in others' lives.

Our mentors teach us to have faith in God, beginning by sharing stories from the Bible. Today, through one such story, we will learn how two women, sisters in God's love, come together after the birth of Jesus. A story to tell the coming generations.

Program

Activity: Divide the group into smaller groups of 4-6 people per group, making sure each smaller group is an intergenerational mix. Ask participants to work together making an ornament for Christmas, care packages for shut-ins, or kits to send to a local mission. (Ornaments may be held until the end of the program to exchange with one another or donated to a local shelter for its Christmas tree.)

As the participants work together, encourage them to talk to one another about their favorite Christmas traditions (music, food, family, friends, church or community activities). When the activity time has ended, invite them to place the items they have made at the foot of the worship center.

Now have each group rearrange into new groups, based on their favorite traditions. Each can be asked to recall her favorite tradition and join others who have named similar favorites. Everyone whose favorite thing is related to food, form a group together, every-

one who names family, together, decorations, together. Build in time for each of these small groups to report to the total group briefly.

Reader: Luke 2:36-38.

Leader: The scripture from Luke tells of Anna who was a prophet and of the day Jesus was brought to the temple for his presentation. At the sight of Jesus, Anna praised God and began to speak of her expectations for this child. She saw great things in him. Mary saw this too. She knew he had so much to learn and that his upbringing was in the hands of her generation. I can hear Anna and Mary reciting the scriptures:

Reader (This could be two women reading together): "Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from old, things that we have heard and known, that our ancestors have told

us. We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done." (Psalm 78:1-4)

Activity: Ask the small groups to discuss how they see Anna and Mary fulfilling what Psalms 78: 1-4 says (*allow five minutes for discussion*). When time has run out have a representative from each group share their thoughts.

Leader: Anna and Mary, as mentors, were called to teach Jesus, to encourage him, to bring out the strength within him, even as we are called to be mentors to our youth.

Activity: Ask the group, as a whole, how they can fulfill Psalm 78. Ask someone to write down the answers on a posterboard. If response is slow in coming, suggest such possibilities as helping in Sunday school, mentoring young women in United Methodist Women, teaching in after-school programs, etc.

Leader: Storytellers, nurturers, teachers and mentors. This is the path we are called to take

as did many before us. We thank Our Lord for the mentors we had, to show us, and we pray we may carry on the tradition to others.

Closing Prayer

Leader: Our God, our nurturer and friend.

All: We will praise you yet more and more.

Leader: Our mouths will tell of your righteous acts, of your deeds of salvation all day long.

All: We will come praising the mighty deeds of the Lord God, We will praise your righteousness, yours alone.

Leader: O God, from our youth you have taught us, and still we proclaim your wondrous deeds.

All: So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake us, until we proclaim your might to all the generations to come.

(Based on Psalm 71: 17-18.)

Preparation

1. Provide handouts of the shared reading.
2. Find, in your community, a mission, a women's or children's shelter, or a list of shutins (people who are unable to leave their homes) who are in need of items the group can collect.
3. Whether assembling a care package, kits, or making ornaments, have on hand the supplies needed. Consider collecting items weeks in advance or asking for donations from those who will participate in the program or from people who want to make a contribution.
4. Look in past issues of *Response* or *New World Outlook* for images of women with children that you can arrange on posters and display during the program.
5. Set up tables and chairs in the room to accommodate the number of people wanted in each of the smaller groups. Place one posada bag at the center of each table.
6. To create posada bags, pour about two cups of sand into the bottom of a lunch-size paper bag and place a tea candle inside the bag, nesting the candle in the sand. The sand will hold the bag and candle in place.
7. Place a posterboard, or large sheets of paper backed by cardboard, on an easel. Place a large black marker nearby for writing down notes during the program. Prior to beginning the program, ask someone to be ready to come up at the time needed to take notes.
8. A small Christmas tree may be arranged in the room for the season.

Resources

Estés, Clarissa Pinkola, Ph.D. *Women Who Run with the Wolves*. Ballantine Books, New York, 1992.

Response, the magazine for United Methodist Women. Subscription, \$12.00 a year (11 issues); \$22.00 for two years. In combination with *New World Outlook*, \$25.00 a year; \$45.00, special two-year rate. Order toll free 1-800-218-4014. Fax 1-845-566-7020.

Schieber, Andrea L., Olson, Ann T., ed. *What Next? Connecting Your Ministry with the Generation Formerly Known as X*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1999.

What's the PURPOSE? Exploring the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women with Teens and College/University Women, New York: The United Methodist Church, 2000. (#02913) \$3.50. Website: <http://gbgm-umc.org>.



Two generations of women are delighted by the expected child.

*Resources listed with stock numbers are available from the Service Center, General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 7820 Reading Road, Callers No. 1800, Cincinnati, OH 45222-1800. Telephone: 1-800-305-9857; Fax: 1-513-761-3722; E-mail: SCorders@gbgm-umc.org. Prices do not include shipping and handling. See inside back cover for information on how to figure these additional costs.



United Methodist Women are challenged to develop a creative support relationship with our sisters of other faiths.

Mission Encounter

Interfaith Study—Faith Communities Living Together

by
Ethel Wolfe Born

Focus Scripture: Genesis 1:26-27.

Focus Image: The focus image should show that there are differences even in similarities. Suggestions: Arrange several vases or pots, each of them different, clustered together. Make a floral arrangement, each flower being a different type and color. Group together and

light candles of a variety of colors, shapes and sizes.

Focus Statement: To create a deeper awareness of the new religious diversity in the United States and to challenge United Methodist Women to develop a creative, supportive relationship with our sisters of other faiths.

Program

The purpose of this program is not to discuss the theological differences between Christianity and other faith traditions, but rather to help us learn how to love our neighbors, in all their differences, even as we love ourselves. (Note Matthew 22:34-40.) If this

program leads your group to want to know more about the major religious traditions of the world, and what they have in common with Christianity, as well as how they differ, the Resources section of this program offers suggested materials.

Preparation

The leader should first glance at the entire program to become familiar with its parts. Prepare enough copies of the section, "Test Your Multicultural and Interreligious I.Q." so that each person may have a copy of all the questions. Familiarize yourself with the answers given in the "Information for the Discussion" section of the program, and locate helpful "Resources" as your time permits. Read through the closing story about the chiming pots, being certain to pronounce the third note in the scale (mi) as "me." Otherwise, the significance of the story will be lost. Have United Methodist hymnals available and someone to provide accompani-

ment for singing the closing hymn. If yours is not a singing group, plan to read the words together.

Begin the program with the "Introduction," leading into the test questions. Ask the group to work on the "Test" in pairs. This will stimulate more thoughtful answers and discussion. When enough time has been allowed to respond to the questions, lead an informal discussion of the answers based on the information given in the section titled "Information for the Discussion." Be sure to include suggestions for action as you discuss each question. Then tell the story about the chiming pots and close with the suggested hymn and prayer.

Introduction

Leader: Our focus statement for "Faith Communities Living Together" is "To create a deeper awareness of the new religious diversity in the

United States and to challenge United Methodist Women to develop a creative, supportive relationship with our sisters of other faiths."

Our focus scripture passage is from the very first chapter of the Bible, the book of Genesis, verses 26 and 27. (Read these verses from the Bible of your choice.) This makes clear that we are all God's children and members of the human family.

Test Your Multicultural and Interreligious I.Q.

True or False?

1. In the early years of our nation's history, immigration was primarily from countries in Europe.
2. Prior to the Immigration Act of 1965, religion in America was generally classified as Protestant, Catholic and Jewish.
3. The United States has been referred to as "a melting pot" because people who immigrated from Europe were assimilated into American life, changing their nationality, language and culture. However, they usually did not change their religion.
4. The United States is the most multicultural country in the world.
5. The United States is the most multi-religious country in the world.
6. Religious diversity in the United States is found primarily in large urban areas.
7. "Diversity" and "pluralism" are the same.
8. The number of American Muslims is greater than the number of American Presbyterians and American Episcopalians.
9. Islam is the religion of one-fifth of humankind.
10. The 1965 Immigration Act allowed a dramatic rise in immigration from Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean.
11. Approximately 4 out of every 100 United States residents are Asian American.
12. One of the U.S. astronauts on the Challenger was a Buddhist American.

Information for the Discussion Following the "Test"

Question 1. TRUE. In the early formative years of our country, many persons migrated from the British Isles, Germany, and other European countries, to seek better economic opportunities, or to escape religious persecution. There were quotas linking immigration to national origins.

Question 2. TRUE. The countries just mentioned from which people were first allowed to come to the United States were predominantly Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish. It has been noted that the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor faces east, toward Europe, and it is from that part of the world that immigrants were first welcomed.

Many Americans remain unaware of the profound changes that are taking place in our society because of the large numbers of immigrants who have come to this country in recent years. You will have an opportunity to test your multicultural and interreligious I.Q. in pairs and then we will discuss the answers as a group.

Question 3. TRUE. The early image of the United States as a "melting pot" is a familiar one. By the second or at least third generation, immigrant families had ceased to speak their original languages and had adapted their dress and culture to their new surroundings, but often they maintained their traditional religion. For example, in 1934, the first Islamic mosque was built in the United States in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Question 4. TRUE. America was built on the ideals expressed by the welcoming figure of the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor with the promise of freedom and the famous words, "Give me your tired, your poor..." People have

come to our shores from every country in the world.

Question 5. TRUE. As already mentioned, when people immigrated from a vast number of countries across the world, they merged into the language and culture of this nation, but kept their own religions. If we consider only the denominations in the Protestant tradition, that is a goodly number. We do not usually notice that Judaism in the United States is made up of Conservative, Reform, Orthodox and Reconstructionist congregations. Now in the United States, there are also Roman Catholics, Orthodox Christians, Unitarians, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs, Baha'is, Jains, Zoroastrians and many other religious groups, often with cultural differences even within the various groups.

Question 6. FALSE. It is easily assumed that new immigrants cluster in large cities and, to some degree, this is true. However, a closer look at any community, even very small towns or rural villages, will reveal persons of varied cultures in community organizations, in the workplace, in schools, and in faith groups, although the latter may not be easily visible.

Question 7. NOT QUITE. *Diversity* and *pluralism* are words that sometimes present different images in our minds when we are talking about the social changes that have taken place in our society in recent decades. Diversity can simply imply variety or differences within any group of people or things. Pluralism (more than one) is the term we often use to talk about communities who represent more than one basic culture, faith, or race. In a pluralistic society, we value people for the differences they bring to the community. Earlier we spoke of the melting pot where all contribute to the flavor and texture, but the final mixture is of one substance. Pluralism is better described as a symphony orchestra with all the distinctive tones of our many cultures blending into the harmony.

Question 8. TRUE. This is a surprising statistic from the 1990 U.S. Census. It reminds us that

when we read or hear a report that 80 to 90 percent of the people in America believe in God, this does not refer exclusively to Christians, but includes people of many other faiths, as well. Similarly, a prayer in school or any other public place may be a prayer from a faith other than the assumed Judeo-Christian tradition. As early as ten years ago, Muslim imams opened sessions of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate with prayer.

Question 9. TRUE. A little known or forgotten fact of our history is that many of the African women and men brought to this country as slaves were followers of the religion of Islam. The 1965 Immigration Act, abolishing the national origins quota system, brought a surge of immigrants from the Middle East. There are nearly 70 mosques and Islamic centers in the metropolitan area of Chicago. Houston has a main mosque plus satellite mosques in various regions of the city, some of which accommodate as many as 900 people for Friday prayers; and gatherings of 10,000 Muslims attend prayers in the George Brown Convention Center on festival days. But in small communities throughout the U.S., Muslim groups may gather in places with no visible religious identification on the exterior of the building.

Question 10. TRUE. After the national origins quota system for immigrants was abolished in 1965, the one million Asian-American population grew to 7.3 million by 1990. During the decade from 1980 to 1990, the Asian population nationwide rose by 79.5 percent.

Question 11. TRUE. Again, this is related to the previous question and comes from the 1990 U.S. Census.

Question 12. TRUE. This confirms that "we the people of the United States of America" takes on new meaning. We must recognize the rapidly changing religious dynamic of America and seek to understand other cultures and religions by developing creative, supportive interaction with our sisters of other faiths.

We are challenged to enlarge our concept of "we the people" and move from recogniz-

ing diversity to participating in pluralism by:

- being aware of persons of other cultures and faiths
- daring to risk forming interfaith friendships
- caring enough about new residents to help them learn the English language through ESL (English as a second language) programs

The Chiming Pots

It was usually a diverse group of people who gathered around Jesus, the master storyteller, when he took an ordinary object or situation and turned it into a parable. The following modern day parable is a true story.

Art Russell, a master potter with strong, skillful hands, developed through years of working with clay on the potter's wheel, removed the graceful pot from the firing kiln and placed it on the work table. Esther, his talented wife who is both artist and musician, admired this latest creation and nodded satisfaction with the decorative touches she had added in this cooperative artistry.

Esther casually picked up a mallet and gently struck it against the side of the pot. "It's a true 'A' note!" she exclaimed. Delighted with this discovery, she began tapping other jars, listening for different notes in the scale. In due time, through trial and error, Art was successful in fashioning beautiful clay jars that chimed the seven notes of the musical scale: "do - re - mi - fa - sol - la - ti" and back to "do." Art and Esther named these "The Chiming Pots from God's Good Earth." They shared their Christian faith and witness with many audiences, actually demonstrating with the potter's wheel and through music and song.

As Esther recently showed two friends through the pottery shop, she called attention to the unique chiming pots. After playing a couple of familiar tunes on the pots, she said,

- sharing in community efforts to help shape pluralistic policies for schools, health services, etc.
- learning about other religious faiths
- listening to others as the beginning of dialogue and deeper understanding
- remembering that *all* humankind is created in God's image.

"You see, each pot is one note on the scale." She then struck each pot in random order, calling out the notes. After playing and naming six notes, she exclaimed, "Oh! I left out one! Which one was it?" An immediate response was "Me!" The friends smiled, realizing that Esther had made her point.

We all feel that no one should be left out—especially me! As we look around us at the many cultures and many faiths that comprise "we the people of the United States" today, let us strive to reach out in understanding to all of God's children so that every "me" will be included.

Close by singing "Help Us Accept Each Other," #560, *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Prayer: Eternal God, we give thanks for our diversity as a part of your great creation. We pray for our neighbors whose expressions of faith are different from ours, the longings of whose hearts we do not always comprehend. Teach us to know that you love all people, help us to respect what we do not yet understand, and to rejoice in the words and acts of truth, beauty and love wherever they may be found. Enable us to live in loving friendship with our neighbors as sisters and brothers, and may we become women of hospitality and builders of a pluralistic society in your world. Amen.

Resources*

Interfaith Relations and the Churches, A Policy Statement of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Can be downloaded from the NCCUSA website:

<http://www.nccusa.org/interfaith/ifr.html>

First We Must Listen, Living in a Multicultural Society, Anne Leo Ellis. Friendship Press, 1-800-889-5733, \$8.95.

Stories in My Neighbor's Faith, Susan L. Scott, ed. Stories that enable understanding of the faith and worship of more than 20 religious groups. (#03464) \$14.95.

Our Muslim Neighbors. General Conference statement on Christian-Muslim relations. (#05208) Free except for postage and handling.

United Methodists Are... (1999 ed.) Brochure listing primary statistics and descriptions of who United Methodists are. Free from General Commission on Christian Unity and

Interreligious Concerns (GCCUIC), 475 Riverside Dr., Room 1300, New York, NY 10115.

Honoring Our Neighbor's Faith. Religious groups tell their stories of who they are, what they believe, and how they practice. GCCUIC. (See above.) \$9.99.

The Bible and People of Other Faiths. Wesley Ariarajah, (ORBIS) Cokesbury. \$4.95.

A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation, Diana L. Eck. HarperSanFrancisco. \$16.95.

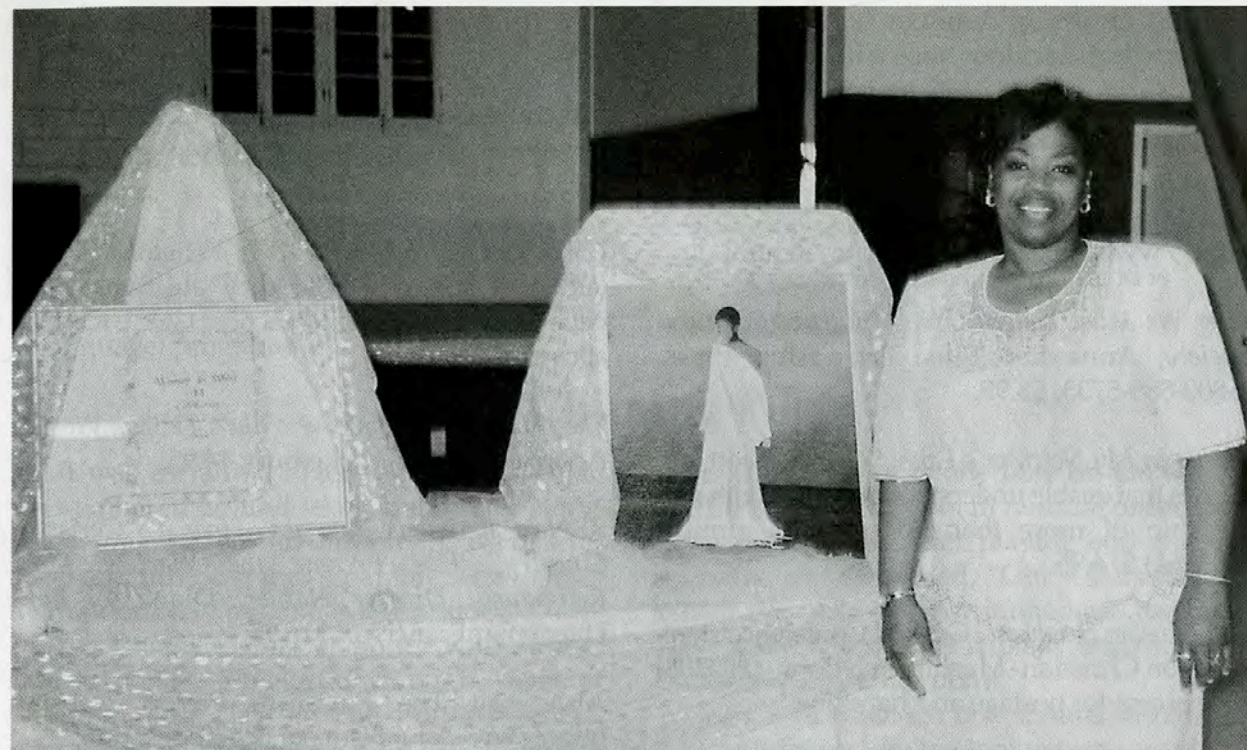
Also visit The Pluralism Project website: <http://www.pluralism.org/ocg/index.php>

Multifaith Calendar website: <http://www.visiontv.ca>



The Chiming Pots, developed by Art and Ester Russell, displayed at the Brooks-Howell Pottery Shop, 266 Merrimon Ave., Asheville, N.C. 28801

*Resources listed with stock numbers are available from the Service Center, General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 7820 Reading Road, Callers No. 1800, Cincinnati, OH 45222-1800. Telephone: 1-800-305-9857; Fax: 1-513-761-3722; E-mail: SCorders@gbgm-umc.org. Prices do not include shipping and handling. See inside back cover for information on how to figure these additional costs.



Sisters of all races, ages and religions joined African American women in the 75-year-old tradition of Women in White at Gulfside, Mississippi.

Mission Encounter

Exodus—Moving Forward

by

Marian T. Martin

Focus Image: The sea and all that surrounds it. Design a space with water, sand, shells, stones, pearls, fish, plants, birds, boats and candles. (See the Focus Statement and Preparation for supplementary suggestions.)

Focus Scripture: The LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward. (Exodus 14:15, *Original African Heritage Edition of the King James Version of the Bible*.)

Focus Statement: Inspiration for this program grew out of long-range planning for the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of Gulfside Assembly. Gulfside, facing the Gulf of Mexico in Waveland, Mississippi, represents one of the most important journeys of our time. It embodies the spirit, commitment, and vision of courageous people who dared to confront bigotry and racial discrimination within the church and society.

Historical Focus

Founded in 1923 by Robert E. Jones, the first African American bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Gulfside continues to provide a place where all of God's people are welcome. Its journey moved through segregation, the Civil Rights Movement, and devastating natural disasters. Its journey continues.

Bishop Alfred Norris appointed a planning group for Gulfside's Seventy-fifth Anniversary. The leader challenged the planners with the theme of the Exodus story. The people of God were caught between the Red Sea ahead of them and Pharaoh's Army behind them. Which way should they go?

The Lord said unto Moses, "Wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward." The Red Sea parted and they were able to go forward on dry land into the land promised as an inheritance.

We found ourselves at a similar impasse, caught between a rich spiritual history on the

one hand, and the challenge of a new century and contemporary society, on the other. Programs and events were planned for the entire year. One that captured the imagination was called, "Women in White."

The Schools of Christian Mission for African American Women started at Gulfside in 1926. We were plagued by justice issues during those years. A highlight of the school sessions was a concluding processional, for which the women, dressed in white and carrying candles, marched toward the water praying and singing, "Walk in the Light."

With the formation of The United Methodist Church in 1968, the Segregated Central Jurisdiction was abolished and what promised to be a brighter future for church and society began. However, peace and justice issues continued to be a concern. "Women in White" was remembered and relived in 1998 and 2002 at the Gulfside Assembly. Again for 2006, sisters of all races, ages and religions are

Highlights of U M W for 2003

February Celebrated U M W Day Feb 23 during regular worship
Harold Glauz Snyder woman of the year.

Youth Honor - Robert Reel. Ice storm on Feb 23 moved
up to March 2.

May 13. Served dinner to 29 * holding group from Hops.

8. Entertained Cambria, Warren's Corners, Exley Methodist
and Ransomville Methodists

June Dinner out at Marine's Landing in Alcott, NY

September Elaine Hertel from Nia Co Vietnam Assistance Unit
was speaker.

Lost 2 members Helen Treatman in March & Ann Wakeman
in summer.

October - Fall Bazaar.

Nov. Thank Offering

Pd Males' Schultys registration fee for summer camp.

Made cookie plates for shut-ins

December - Dinner at Stromshakes with ice cream & cake

later at home of Nancy Jacobs. A lot of money
went for mission work at St. Luke in Buffalo

Pd 2,500 to church budget to pay church appointments

Chose a Sunday School student as a prayer partner
for year 2004.

Highlights 2004

Feb U. M. W. Sunday in church.

Woman honor - Norma Clark Youth - Males' Schultys

Bought a TV cast for church and Big enough to
have VCR on for use

May Guest Mts Cambria, Wilson Exley, Warren's Corners
Ransomville & Fullman chapel.

Speaker - Paul Bates from Laidpost spoke on History of local
Jars & Bottles

June - Dinner Out at Shepherds Restaurant in Williamsville

September - Pd for Maren Schlotz, summer camp registration 150⁰⁰

October - Bazaar and Basket Fair. Baskets went down well
better than dried arrangements

November - Thank offering

December - Dinner at Shemshacks, Dessert at home of Nancy Jacobs

Made 11 Caskin Trays for children

Whole Gift went to Prison Ministry thru the Jaume.

invited to join African American women for this historical "Walk in the Light."

Life is a journey. The Holy Spirit moves the heart, mind, body and spirit. We think, we

walk, we dance, we march, clapping and singing. Moving forward, towards the sea, surrounded by God's beautiful creation, reaching for the horizon, one cannot help but feel thankful, empowered, liberated and moved to action.

Program

Encourage participants to visit the Focus Center upon arrival. Begin your session by singing the first stanza of "We're Marching to Zion." Repeat the chorus and begin to focus and move, as able, toward the focus center. Make sure that everyone has a chance to explore the center. Stop, stand still, bow heads and pray silently. Each participant may determine when she has completed her meditation and at that point, return to her seat.

Leader: Read the Exodus 14:15 passage as the group continues to focus on the worship center. Introduce other translations of the scripture, if you choose, using other readers. Give a summary of the Historical Focus, above, to the total group.

Litany: Energized to Proclaim God's Peace

"Now, in Christ Jesus, you who once were far off have been brought near....For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us." (Ephesians 2:13,14)

In the following litany, the leader will read a petition, ending it with the phrase, "In peace," ... In response, the group will say, "Let us pray to the Lord."

Leader: God of love, your son, Jesus Christ, promised his disciples, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you." (John 14:27) By the power of the Holy Spirit, set our souls on fire, fill us with grace, and energize our hearts, minds, and wills that we may:

Be free to embrace and celebrate the relationship and partnership God offers us. In peace,

Activity: Ask the group to think of a situation, past or present, when they were at an impasse, caught "between the devil and the deep blue sea."

What did/will you do?

What new insight have you gained from the scripture?

How do these insights change/move you to action?

Allow 5 to 10 minutes for discussion with a partner. Move around the room with your partner; keep focused on the worship center. Return to seats for volunteer sharing.

R.: Let us pray to the Lord.

L.: Live the Gospel of Jesus Christ by testifying to, witnessing and reflecting God's love. In peace,

R.: Let us pray to the Lord.

L.: Be accountable to God as we develop as servant leaders. In peace,

R.: Let us pray to the Lord.

L.: Foster families nurtured in faith and commitment to live in harmony with one another and in community. In peace,

R.: Let us pray to the Lord.

L.: Celebrate God's diversity in all creation and in one another. In peace,

R.: Let us pray to the Lord.

L.: Intentionally confront our own prejudice and racism, affirming diverse gifts and partnering with one another in God's ministry. In peace,

R.: Let us pray to the Lord.

L.: Create vital, healthy congregational and inter-congregational units, and organizations, relating to one another in fulfilling our mission. In peace,

R.: Let us pray to the Lord.

L.: Recognize that all that we are and have belongs to God. In peace,

R.: Let us pray to the Lord.

L.: Work to change systems and structures that oppress and alienate. In peace,

R.: Let us pray to the Lord.

L.: Understand that community includes affirmation of each person's God-given worth; work to provide full and equal access to education for all women, aware of opportunities for global education; and recognize that education is a continuing life-long journey for the individual and the church. In peace,

R.: Let us pray to the Lord.

L.: Gather as the baptized, with worship central in our life together. In peace,

R.: Let us pray to the Lord.

L.: Provide a safe place where women who process issues of gender are validated in making choices that affect their own destinies. In peace,

R.: Let us pray to the Lord.

L.: Be women in community pursuing that which makes for peace. In peace,

R.: Let us pray to the Lord.

L.: "With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Ephesians 4:2,3)

All: May the love of God, our Creator, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, our Savior, and the power of the Holy Spirit, our Enabler, sanctify us and equip us to proclaim God's peace in the church, the society and the world. Amen.

(Adapted from a litany prepared by Delores Yancey for the women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. Scripture quotations are from the NRSV. Used by permission.)

Prayer: Read together the last stanza of "Lift Every Voice and Sing," #519, *The United Methodist Hymnal*, or #210, *Songs of Zion*.

Spiritual: "Mary, Don't You Weep," #134, *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Preparation

Set up the worship center, using your own creative gifts to suggest sand and sea. Select a color for all to wear. It may be clothing, a ribbon, a flower, or any other colored symbol. Plan for the group to sit in a circle with the worship center in the middle. (This works well for those with limited mobility.)

Select a leader of the program and a song leader/musician.

Provide copies of *Songs of Zion* and *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Provide copies of the Litany for each participant.

You may want to provide the scripture readings from several different translations of the Bible. For instance, *The New English Bible*, *Good News*, *The King James Version*, *the Jerusalem Bible*, and others.

Resources*

New World Outlook, the mission magazine of The United Methodist Church, \$12.00 a year (6 issues). Order toll free 1-800-218-4014. Fax 1-845-566-7020; March/April, 1993, pages 16-19.

Oasis of Hope. Video, Gulfside Assembly, Waveland, MS. Distributed by Ecru Film.

God's Amazing Grace. Video, Gulfside Assembly, Waveland, MS. Distributed by United Methodist Communications, \$10.

To a Higher Glory: The Growth and Development of Black Women Organized for Mission in The United Methodist Church, 1940-1968. Prepared for the Women's Division by the Education and Cultivation Division, Board of Global

Ministries, The United Methodist Church. Check your local church library or order from the Service Center the CD-ROM video, *Ten Best Books on the History of United Methodist Women*, (#02829), \$40.00. *To a Higher Glory* is one of the ten. (See below.)

Legacy for the Future: The History of Christian Social Relations in the Women's Division of Christian Service, 1940-1968, by Thelma Stevens, 1978, Women's Division, Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, is available in many local church libraries. The CD-ROM, *Ten Best Books on the History of United Methodist Women*, that includes *Legacy for the Future* is available from the Service Center. (#02829) \$40.00. (See above.)

*Resources listed with stock numbers are available from the Service Center, General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 7820 Reading Road, Callers No. 1800, Cincinnati, OH 45222-1800. Telephone: 1-800-305-9857; Fax: 1-513-761-3722; E-mail: SCorders@gbgm-umc.org. Prices do not include shipping and handling. See inside back cover for information on how to figure these additional costs.

Mission Encounter

Mexico—Our Sisters to the South

by

Marisa Villarreal

Focus Scripture: Proverbs 31:30b-31.

...a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.
Give her a share in the fruit of her hands,
and let her works praise her in the city gates.

Focus Image: Arrange a worship center with a cross, three candles (green, white, and red representing the colors of the Mexican flag), and a Bible open to Proverbs 31. On a wall or screen behind the worship center, arrange a

map of North America or a map of the United States and Mexico. On each side of the map, place a blank piece of newsprint or a large, blank cut-out of a female figure, on which brief notations can be made.

Focus Statement: This program will help us evaluate our relationship, as persons and as citizens of the United States, to Mexico and to people of Mexican descent in our midst.

Program

Have pre-recorded Mexican music playing as persons arrive.

Additional songs, recorded or to be sung by the group as they gather:

"We, Thy People, Praise Thee," #67, *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

"Sent Out in Jesus' Name, #113, *Global Praise 2*.
"Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life, #427, *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Opening Hymn: "Here, O Lord, Your Servants Gather," #552, Stanza 1, *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Leader: Our sisters to the south live in an environment that includes deserts and jungles, state-of-the-art skyscrapers and adobe huts with thatched-roofs, environmentally hazardous dump sites, and archaeological treasures. Our sisters to the south find themselves living in a social establishment influenced by traditions, language, and music from empires

that are long gone, and by current global forces that drive their present-day economic systems.

Prayer

Leader: For the next few minutes, we will:

1. Think of some of the things that are important to us as women. Will each of you come forward and write on the newsprint (or the cut-out of the woman) to your right, one thing that is important to you.
2. Identify some things that we think/know are important to women of Mexico. Will each of you come forward and write on the paper (or cut-out) to your left, one thing that you think is important to the women of Mexico.
3. Now, let us think about and share with the group the similarities and differences between our two lists. (Allow time for comments from each person or from those who volunteer to comment.)

Song: "For Ages Women Hoped and Prayed"
(Sing to the tune of "O Spirit of the Living God,"
#539, *The United Methodist Hymnal*).

For ages women hoped and prayed,
To bear the Anointed One
Both Israel's Savior and the world's,
The new day's shining Sun.

Did they not know?
Did they not guess?
What pain would then be theirs,
If God's Anointed graced their home
In answer to their prayers?

Young Mary did not think to hope
For miracles of birth
And God chose her to be the one
To make Christ's home on earth.

So Mary sang her heart-felt praise
Of God who sets things straight.
The mighty fall, the weak are raised,
The hungry fill their plate.

Our hearts rejoice as Mary's song
Becomes our hymn of praise
For Christ has come, Emmanuel!
To claim our years and days.

Both present now and coming still.
Accomplished fact and dream.
We join the song that Mary sings,
An earthly, heavenly theme.

A Singing Faith by Jane Parker Huber. Philadelphia:
Westminster Press, 1987. Used by permission.

Leader: Virtuous woman, who will find her?
Her value surpasses that of precious stones. Her
husband's heart trusts her and he will not lack
earnings. From her he receives the good and not
the wrong every day of their life. She looks for
wool and linen, and she works gladly with her
hands. She is as the merchant's ship that brings
their bread from afar. Even at night, she gets up
to give food to their family and a portion to their
maids. She considers a field and buys it, and
with her own hands she plants a vineyard. She
girds herself firmly and strengthens her arms.
She sees that the business goes well, her lamp
does not fade at night. (Proverbs 31:10-18**)

Speaker 1: This woman, this virtuous woman, is

everywhere and yet she is so often unknown.
There are many young women who are unable
to bring provisions to their families. They are
the maids hoping to receive just pay for their
labor, and they are factory workers who in the
process of searching for a better life have found
illness and, sometimes, death.

Hymn: "Song of Community," Stanza 1.

Leader: She puts her hands to the distaff, and her
hands hold the spindle. She opens her hand to the
poor, and reaches out her hands to the needy. She
is not afraid for her household when it snows, for
all her household are clothed in heavy clothes.
(Proverbs 31:19-21. **)

Speaker 2: There is fear brought about by the
realities of poverty, but there is also joy and
thanksgiving for persons like the ones involved
in "Church Without Borders," who are commit-
ted to serve along the border between Mexico
and the United States. Let us find ways of
extending hospitality to the needy. (For further
information about "Church Without Borders,"
see the article by this title in the May 2002 issue
of *Response*, p. 18.)

Hymn: "Song of Community," Stanza 2.

Leader: She knits the tapestries, and her dress is
fine linen and purple. Her husband is known in
the doors of the city when he sits down with the
old men of the country. She makes linen gar-
ments and she sells them; and provides sashes to
the merchant. Strength and honor are her cloth-
ing and she laughs at the time to come. She
opens her mouth with wisdom, and the law of
mercy is in her language. She considers the work
of her household, and does not eat the bread of
idleness (Proverbs 31: 22-27 **)

Speaker 3: Yet the women in many communities
are forced to remain in the background, and
when searching for knowledge and identity, they
may become victims of spousal abuse. Regardless
of which of the 62 indigenous groups they belong
to, or which of the 92 indigenous languages they
speak, women in Mexico are sending their mes-
sage to the rest of the world with hope to eradi-

cate infant mortality, malnutrition, and lack of
health care. They are also aware of many other
things that should be their basic human rights.
Struggle and hope are their daily bread.

Hymn: "Song of Community," Stanza 3.

Leader: Her children get up and they call her
happy; her husband also praises her: "Many
women have done well, but you surpass them
all!" Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but
a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.
(Proverbs 31:28-30**)

Speaker 4: While our sisters are fighting to
receive basic respect and pay for their labor as
domestic workers, all of us as Methodist Women
are working for mission, promoting spiritual
growth, interest in Christian life and service, and
involvement in social change and evangelization.

Hymn: "Song of Community," Stanza 4.

Leader: Let us revisit our lists. Have any of our
views/ideas changed? How different or simi-
lar? How can we be in mission with our sisters
to the south? (Leader allows a few minutes for
sharing.)

Hymn: "Song of Community," Stanza 5.

Prayer in Unison: Loving God and Creator of
all peoples, help us to understand the needs of
our sisters to the south, and our own needs, as
well. Let all of us acknowledge that all our lives
are lives of value and virtue. Amen.

Closing Song: "O Many People of All Lands,
51, *Global Praise* 1.

**Reina-Valera Translation of Proverbs, 1995

Preparation

Secure the following:

1. Bible, a small, free-standing cross, and three
candles (one red, one white, one green,
representing the colors of the Mexican flag).
You may find small reproductions of the
Mexican flag in many dictionaries or in a
World Almanac. You might want to make a
drawing of the flag as a part of your display
for the program.
2. The May, 2002 issue of *Response* (several
copies if possible).
3. A map or an outline drawn on newsprint

with a broad-tip marker of Mexico and the
United States.

4. Two sheets of blank newsprint.
5. Large cut-outs from newsprint or plain
paper of two female figures.
6. Broad-tip markers.
7. Pre-recorded Mexican music.
8. Hymnals and song books.
9. A leader and speakers appointed ahead
of time.
10. A piano and pianist available for music.

Resources

Each of the statements for the four speakers is
based on articles from *Response*,* May 2002.
#03199,\$1.50. If you would like to expand the
program, invite several women to provide
brief summaries of articles in that issue. For
example:

"New Agency Gets Women's Story Out," p. 32.

"Ciudad Juarez: Death Not Development," p. 26.

"Missouri West United Methodists Support
Ministry to Newest Neighbors," p. 37.

"Church Without Borders," p. 18.

"Indigenous Women Struggle for Dignity," p. 22.

"Indigenous Peoples Message," p. 30.

"Domestic Workers Fight for Rights," p. 20.

"Mexican Methodist Women in Mission," p. 30.

Song of Community

Words and Music by Carolyn McDade

We'll weave a love that greens sure as spring, then deep - ens in sum - mer to the
 We'll weave a love that o - pens our eyes to see one an - oth - er be -
 We'll weave a love that touch - es our pain, that comes like the wa - ter to
 We'll weave a love that holds the des - pised, the strang - er who wan - ders, the
 We'll weave a love with roots grow - ing deep and sap push - ing branch - es to

fall au - tumn brings, Rest - ing still in win - ter to spi - ral a -
 yond all dis - guise, Where our trust like wa - ter will wash a - way
 drought - fe - vered plains, so the roots once with - ered sing praise to the
 fo - cus of lies, We'll stand sure as moun - tains with earth's vic - tim -
 wake from their sleep, Bear - ing leaves burnt am - ber with morn - ing's full

gain,
 lies,
 rain,
 ized,
 sweep,
 To - geth - er, my friends, we'll weave on, we'll weave on.

Words and music by Carolyn McDade. Used by permission.

Reproduce copies of the music and words of "Song of Community" for members of your unit. Pianist and program leader should rehearse beforehand so that they can easily lead the group in singing each of the five stanzas as indicated in the program.

Chorus

a love that heals, friend, that bends, friend, that ris - ing and
 turn - ing then yields, friend, like the moun - tain to rain, or frost in the
 spring, or dark - ness that turns with the dawn. It's by turn - ing,
 turn - ing, turn - ing, my friend, by turn - ing that love moves on.



Photo by Archie Hamilton



Photo courtesy of Julia Chang



Deaconess Emblem

Deaconesses of many cultures are in mission throughout the world with the poor, the oppressed, and those living on the edge of society.

Special Program

World Thank Offering— Gratitude and Service

by
Betty S. Purkey

Focus Image: Design a worship center by covering a small table with a cloth of many colors representing the diversity of the diaconate. On the table place a pitcher, basin of water and a towel representing servant ministry. Add to the worship center copies of current newspapers with headlines of happenings in the world, and copies of current magazines including *Response* and *New World Outlook*. Have a Bible open to Acts 6.

Focus Scripture: Luke 4:18; Acts 6:1-4.

Focus Statement: The deaconess movement in the United Methodist Church and its prede-

cessor organizations, as well as in other denominations, was the forerunner of the ever-expanding diaconate. It has been responsible for the establishment of clinics, hospitals, settlement houses (community centers), schools, colleges, women's residences and child-care facilities. These ministries are in isolated rural areas and inner cities. Deaconesses, deacons, diaconal ministers, missionaries, and other mission personnel are set aside for full-time service through the church. As we give thanks to be in mission partnership with these persons through our World Thank Offering, we realize that as Christians, we too are all called to service ministries.

Program

Opening Prayer. (Leader reads the names from the Prayer Calendar of people with birthdays on this date, then offers prayer.)

O God, we give thanks for these people whose names have been lifted up to you. We pray for them and for their ministries as well as for all those who reach out in mission and ministry around the world. Grant them and us a new sense of your presence in our lives and the strength and courage to be your faithful disciples in this day and age in which we live. Amen.

Scripture: Luke 4:18; Acts 6: 1-4.

Hymn: "O Young and Fearless Prophet," #444, *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Leader: The deaconess movement in the United Methodist tradition and in other denominations has been the forerunner of the ever-expanding

diaconate. Deaconesses have traditionally worked among the poor, the oppressed, and those living on the edge of society. Meet some of them and hear the stories of their ministries, along with the stories of other Christians who have responded to God's call to serve through the church.

Reader 1: My name is Louise. I am a member of a small-membership United Methodist church. God called my husband and me to be concerned about the needs in our community. So, we assisted in establishing a clothing ministry, a housing rehabilitation program, and a gardening project with low-income families. Our lives have been dramatically transformed and our understanding of why people are poor has been reshaped by the privilege of being in ministry with those who are impoverished. I give thanks for all we have learned and for the transforma-

Our table has pitcher & bowl to symbolize service to poor

tion that has taken place in our lives because of our involvement in our local community.

Reader 2: Hi, I'm Esther. I serve as a deaconess with families in one of the 25 poorest counties in the United States. These families call on me to work with them on survival decisions, like how to heat their homes, buy food or purchase medication. I work hard to help them find the resources they need and to advocate for them with local, state and federal government agencies. There are times when my heart aches because there seems to be no viable solution to their problems. I am thankful for the privilege of relating to these families—they have become family to me.

Reader 3: Hello, I am Sarah. As a US-2, young adult missionary, I worked at a facility that cares for people with AIDS. It was one of the hardest things I have ever done. It was not easy to bathe, diaper, feed and comfort the patients. It was hard to deal with death on an ongoing basis, especially after working so closely with, and getting attached to people. There were times when I wanted to give up but I am so grateful I completed my two-year term. It was a life-changing experience for me.

Reader 4: My name is Juanita. As a member of a United Methodist church, I have been called to address the issue of our environment. This has put me in opposition to corporations that take the natural resources from our mountains and leave our streams polluted, that clear-cut forests, leaving areas prone to flooding, and that want to fill abandoned coal mines with hazardous waste. My life has been threatened because of positions I have taken but I feel this is where God has called me to be and what God has called me to do. I thank God for giving me the opportunity to take a stand against the forces that would destroy the earth—our home.

Reader 5: Hi, I'm Rebekah. I was pushed by one of my friends to go on a Volunteers in Mission trip to Appalachia with a group from my church. What a life-changing experience the trip was for me! We worked on the house of an elderly man who had no electricity or running water. I was saddened that people in the United

States still live like that. I am now so hooked on the mission program of the church that I have left my teaching job to work fulltime as a missionary under the General Board of Global Ministries. Each day I lift a prayer of gratitude to God for giving me the privilege of serving through The United Methodist Church.

Leader: The diaconate has risen and fallen over the centuries. It was revived by a young Lutheran pastor, Theodore Fliedner, in 1836 in Kaiserswerth, Germany, and first introduced to North America by Pastor Fliedner in 1849 when he brought four German deaconesses to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to establish the first Protestant hospital west of the Allegheny Mountains. Other denominations, including predecessor organizations of the United Methodist Church, soon followed with the establishment of the diaconate.

Responder: Lucy Rider Meyer initiated the deaconess movement within The United Methodist tradition. A young woman with a passion and a dream for training young women for Christian service, Ms. Meyer founded the Chicago Training School in 1885. The Methodist Episcopal Church recognized the Office of Deaconess in 1888. The movement grew rapidly. Hospitals, settlement houses, schools and women's residences sprang up across the United States.

Leader: From early youth, Isabella Thoburn felt a calling to enter foreign mission work but the idea of sending unmarried women as missionaries was unknown to the church at that time. Nevertheless, she sent a letter to the Mission Board of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which was forwarded to women of the church who were in the process of organizing the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, indicating that she was willing to do the humblest work. She became the first woman employed as a missionary in a foreign field when the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society sent her to India in 1870.

Responder: During her second furlough in the United States, Isabella Thoburn taught at the Chicago Training School and assisted Lucy Rider Meyer with the deaconess movement. Isabella

went out frequently, leading her little band of deaconess candidates into the streets of Chicago. Within two years she received a pressing invitation to go to Cincinnati, Ohio, to lay the ground work for similar work there. She became the head deaconess of the Elizabeth Gamble Deaconess Association and securely laid the foundation for the Deaconess Home and Training School and Christ Hospital in Cincinnati. Her five years' furlough and her undying call to mission played a vital role in launching the great deaconess and hospital work in the church, both immediately and for future generations. She subsequently returned to India as the pioneer deaconess of the Methodist Church in India.

Leader: The Deaconess movement continued to expand. By 1900 there were 32 deaconess institutions—homes, schools, and hospitals—more than 300 deaconesses and students preparing for the work. Deaconesses were sent into the slums of the city, saloons, houses of prostitution and train stations. They were bold, daring, courageous and on the cutting edge of mission where the church had not been, was not aware it should be, or was afraid or unwilling to be. Deaconesses continue today in that tradition.

Showing of the Deaconess Video: *Love, Justice and Service—The Ministry of Deaconesses* (approximately 14 minutes).

Leader: In 1976, the lay Office of Diaconal Ministry was established. The Study of the Ministry, adopted by the 1996 General Conference, established the Order of Deacon, bringing to a close the separate consecration of new diaconal ministers. The common understanding now is that deacons in full connection are ordained to ministries of word and service. Margaret Ann Crain and Jack L. Seymour, in their book, *A Deacon's Heart*, say: "The office of deaconess ... actually is a predecessor to that of the deacon in The United Methodist Church. The ministry of *diakonia* set the model for the ministry of the new deacon in many ways."

Responder: Following World War II a new beginning was needed for members of the diaconate to come together to support and assist

each other and to renew ties of ecumenical fellowship torn by war. Out of this need, DIAKONIA, a World Federation of Diaconal Communities and Diaconal Associations, was founded in 1947 in Copenhagen, Denmark. From that beginning, DIAKONIA has spread to the continents and islands of the world. It comprises 65 associations, which include 23,000 women and men who are deaconesses, deacons, diaconal ministers, diaconal sisters and female church workers responding to God's call. This international structure is divided, for functional purposes, into three regions: (1) Asia and the Pacific, (2) Europe and Africa, and (3) the Americas and the Caribbean.

Leader: Now, having been briefly introduced to people who are a part of the diaconate and people who are lay members of local churches living their lives in service, spend some time in silence, meditating on God's call and the needs of your community and beyond. Reflect on the following questions: *Amen*

1. What are you doing in mission? How could you expand that?
2. What do you know about what other people are doing in mission?
3. Where are those places that God is calling you to service through the church, whether it is to fulltime, lifetime ministry as a part of the diaconate or as a lay person addressing needs in your local community or beyond?

Divide into groups of three to four people to discuss the above questions. Then come back together as a group and lift up the salient points made during the discussion in each of the small groups. At this time the leader could share "opportunities" for involvement in ministries in your local community. Allow a few moments for individual reflection, thanksgiving and commitment.

Leader: God has blessed each of us in so many ways. As a part of our gratitude for all the gifts we have received, we now have an opportunity to share a portion of those gifts with others through our World Thank Offering.

Offering: (While the pianist is playing softly, the Leader invites members to come forward and place their World Thank Offering in a basket.)

Prayer: (Pray in unison).

For the many gifts you give us,
we give to you our thanks, O God.
Our lives are also a gift from you.
We offer now to you a part of our
material possessions to be used in
meeting the needs of our neighbors;
and we offer our lives that they may be
faithful to your call to "bring good news
to the poor ... to proclaim release to the
captives, recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the captives go free."
(Luke 4:18)

Litany of Commitment

Leader: Just as you, O God, send deaconesses,
deacons and diaconal ministers and missionaries
to serve in the hills and mountains, in the dry and
dusty plains, in isolated rural areas and busy
cities, you call us to serve along with them in such
places in this country and around the world.

All: We, too, have received special gifts and talents through which you can work. We know you call us to make your love and presence known where we live and work. We join with you in participating in your mission with those who are living on the margins of society.

Leader: Lead us by your gentle spirit to those places where people are suffering from hunger, unemployment and lack of affordable housing; where there is violence and oppression, and where human rights are denied.

All: Also lead us to the boardrooms of corporations and to the halls of Congress where decisions are made that affect the lives of people all over the world. Help us seek to be faithful to your call in our lives, to be with those who are oppressed, downtrodden and without hope. Amen!

Hymn: "The Voice of God Is Calling," #436, *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Benediction: May God, who both comforts and disturbs us, help us to be the splash that causes the ripples of transformation that bring hope, healing and peace to our world.

Preparation

1. Set up a table for the worship center. You will need a cloth of many colors, a pitcher and basin of water, a towel, current newspapers, current copies of magazines, including *Response* and *New World Outlook*, and a basket to use for the offering.
2. Bring a copy of *The United Methodist Hymnal* for each member and arrange to have a pianist to play the hymns.
3. At the beginning of the calendar year, order a World Thank Offering Box for each member or a label for members to put on a jar or box of their own and encourage them to place money in the box or jar on a regular basis. At least one month before the World Thank Offering program, order from the Service

Center enough copies of the World Thank Offering leaflet for each person and at the meeting just preceding this one, remind members to bring their offering to "the next meeting."

4. At least two months before the program, do research in your local community to find those places, such as homeless shelters, after-school tutoring programs, English as a Second Language and Adult Basic Education classes, prison ministries and Habitat for Humanity where members of your local United Methodist Women's unit can volunteer. Have a sign-up sheet ready on the table at this meeting, so that volunteers can indicate their availability to serve.

Resources*

Crain, Margaret Ann and Seymour, Jack L., *A Deacon's Heart: The New United Methodist Diaconate*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001. (#090326) \$15.00. Available from Cokesbury Bookstores. Call 1-800-672-1789.

Dougherty, Mary Agnes. *My Calling to Fulfill: Deaconesses in the United Methodist Tradition*. New York: General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 1997. (#02656) \$9.95.

New World Outlook, the mission magazine of the United Methodist Church, \$15.00 a year (six issues); \$26.00 for two years. See *Response* for combination subscription information. Order toll free 1-800-281-4014. Fax 1-845-566-7020.

The Prayer Calendar. 2003 (#03179) \$7.50, 2004 (#03298) \$8.50.

Response, the magazine for United Methodist Women. Subscriptions, \$12 a year (11 issues); \$22.00 for two years. In combination with *New World Outlook*, \$25.00 a year; \$45.00 for two years. Order toll free 1-800-218-4014. Fax 1-845-566-7020.

Video: *Love, Justice and Service-The Ministry of Deaconesses*. (#02757), \$8.00.

World Thank Offering materials. Leaflet (English and Spanish #05706; Korean #05311). Label (Bilingual #05105) free for postage and handling. Offering Box (Bilingual #01731) 45¢, 50 or more 40¢ each.



The deaconess movement continues to grow. This group with Betty Purkey, third from left, was commissioned in 2002.

*Resources listed with stock numbers are available from the Service Center, General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 7820 Reading Road, Call No. 1800, Cincinnati, OH 45222-1800. Telephone: 1-800-305-9857; Fax: 1-513-761-3722; E-mail: SCorders@gbgm-umc.org. Prices do not include shipping and handling. See inside back cover for information on how to figure these additional costs.



Photo by Brian Harmon

Women at the Killingsworth residence in Columbia, South Carolina, find temporary shelter and guidance through tough transitions in their lives. With United Methodist Women and other partners, this National Mission Institution helps residents form supportive, nurturing relationships that inspire emotional and spiritual healing.

Special Program

Quiet Day Service for A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial—My Healing, My Sister's Healing

by
Joyce Hamlin *Sue*

1) Pass out bookmarks

Focus Image: Create a worship center by covering a table with a colorful cloth, placing on it a Bible, three candles and pictures of women of several different countries, races, and ages. (Use *Response* and/or *New World Outlook* to find the pictures.) Mount the pictures on construction paper and cardboard.

Focus Statement: As Jesus healed people long ago, Christ continues to offer us healing and wholeness today. As women in mission, we continue Christ's ministry of healing through the mission institutions of the General Board of Global Ministries. These schools, hospitals, community centers and women's residences offer healing to our sisters in the United States and countries throughout the world.

Focus Scripture: Luke 4:40 and Luke 7:21-22.

Sue

Program

Invitation and Welcome

Leader: Welcome to our Quiet Day Service as we observe a Call to Prayer and Self-Denial. Since 1911, United Methodist Women have met each year to pray, to consider Christ's call to give sacrificially, and to remember our mission. Today our focus will be on health and healing, "My Healing, My Sister's Healing."

Sue

Jesus' Healing Ministry

Leader: Let us begin by looking at Jesus' healing ministry.

(Ask the women to gather in groups of three or four. Give each group one of these biblical passages along with the following assignment.)

Group 1

Luke 8:43-48 (The woman who bled for 12 years). Assignment: Read the passage and discuss who needs healing in your unit or church. How can United Methodist Women be to them an instrument of healing?

Luke 8:49-56 (The raising of Jairus' daughter).

Assignment: Read the passage and discuss who or what needs healing, and new life, in your community. How can United Methodist Women be an instrument of healing and new life in your community?

Luke 13:10-13 (The bent-over woman). Assignment: Read the passage and discuss who or what needs healing in the nation. How can United Methodist Women be an instrument of healing in the nation?

Group 2

Luke 7:21-22 (Jesus' healing ministry). Assignment: Read the passage and discuss who or what needs healing in the world. How can United Methodist Women be an instrument of healing in the world?

Group 3

(Give each group five minutes to discuss the question and three minutes each to share their thoughts with the total group.)

Healing for Ourselves and Our Concerns

Leader: I light this candle [lights first candle] to represent those of us gathered here today. Let

Sue

us pray for our healing and the healing of those persons or issues that we have identified.

[Leads guided meditation.] Let us center our minds on the healing God offers us. Sit in a comfortable position, your body relaxed and both feet on the floor. Focus on your breathing. Breathe in God's healing presence. Breathe out any tension or care. *[Silence]* Feel the light of God's love surrounding you. *[Silence]* Bring into the light your need for healing and the names of any persons or concerns that need healing. *[Silence]*

Prayer: Dear God, we thank you that you give health, life and blessing to all who seek you. We place in your care our lives and the lives of those for whom we have prayed. We make our petitions in the name of Christ. Amen.

Hymn: "There Is a Balm in Gilead," #375, *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Healing for Our Sisters in the United States

Leader: I light this candle *[lights second candle]* to represent our sisters who are experiencing healing through the mission projects we support in the United States through our Pledge to Mission, and the offering we will give today. Let's look at their stories.

(Give each group one of the following stories. Ask one person in the group to read the story and ask the group to be prepared to offer a prayer of thanksgiving for this sister's healing and a prayer for the mission project that helped her. Give each group six minutes to read the story and prepare a prayer to offer on behalf of the total group. Some names have been changed to protect privacy.)

1. Killingsworth Home for Women, Columbia, SC. Sherry had been addicted to drugs for 10 years and was in jail when Diane Moseley, program coordinator at Killingsworth, met her. Ms. Moseley was leading a Bible study in the jail. When Sherry was released, she was detoxified and ready to come to Killingsworth. She continued working on her recovery program and began learning how to

live as a responsible person. "I'm just really grateful that God brought me out, and for a place like Killingsworth, where I can learn to take care of myself," Sherry said. She has now kept a job for over a year, has received two raises and a promotion and hopes to go to school to improve her skills.

Killingsworth houses 18 women who are recovering from alcohol and drug abuse, mental and emotional illness and other difficulties. It offers counseling, assistance with employment and education, and a supportive, loving atmosphere. Killingsworth was established by the Woman's Division of the Methodist Church in 1947. It is a national mission institution that receives undesignated giving.

2. Rao Center for Behavioral Health Care at the Neighborhood Center, Utica, NY. Sarah was 13 when her mother brought her to the Rao Center. She had swallowed a number of aspirin and, although she said she didn't want to die, she had been depressed for almost a year. She was on anti-depressant medication, but this did not seem to be helping enough, so her mother felt counseling might help. Caring staff at the Rao Center began meeting with Sarah and her mother. Gradually, the staff learned that the child's depression was caused by anger at her mother. Sarah had been abused as a small child and felt that her mother did not protect her enough. Counselors continued to help both mother and child work through their feelings and issues together. Sarah's grades began to improve, her sleeping and eating became normal, and she was able to go off her medication completely. After six months, Sarah and her family experienced healing. She sent a note to the staff saying, "You helped me live a normal life. It feels like I can now breathe again."

The Neighborhood Center was founded in 1905 by the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It provides child care, comprehensive mental health, and social services to children, youth and families. It works to connect people with hope, opportunity, and belief in themselves. It is a national mission institution that receives undesignated giving.

3. Shesler Residence Hall, Sioux City, IA. Ginger is dealing with mental illness. She has schizophrenia and hears voices that tell her she is not worthy enough to be on earth. The voices tell her to hurt herself. As a result, Ginger has been hospitalized at least once a year. Although medication helps, it was not enough to keep her safe. Since coming to Shesler Hall, however, Ginger has received loving care from the staff. The structure of the program and the consistent, caring support of the staff have enabled Ginger to improve. She has not been hospitalized for over five years. While many residents stay at Shesler Hall a month or two, until they get back on their feet, people like Ginger need a longer time to become stabilized. One resident said this about her stay: "[I liked] the hospitality, knowing you had fellowship, concern from staff members, and the fact that you could be yourself."

Shesler Residence Hall was founded in 1901 as a residence for deaconesses who worked among the poor. It now offers women a place to recover from mental illness, addiction, homelessness, domestic violence and other difficulties. It is a national mission institution that receives undesignated giving.

Healing for Our Sisters Around the World

Leader: I light this candle *[lights third candle]* to represent our sisters who are experiencing healing through the international mission projects we support in the United States through our Pledge to Mission and the offering we will give today. In these stories we will meet some sisters who have been healed and some who are offering healing to others.

Give each group of three to five persons one of the following stories. Ask one person in the group to read the story and ask the group to be prepared to offer a prayer of thanksgiving for this sister's ministry and a prayer for the mission project she works with. Give each group six minutes to read the story and prepare a prayer to offer on behalf of the total group. Note: If your time is limited and you have a large enough group, you can combine the U.S. and international stories into one segment of the program, rather than two.

1. Community Based Primary Health Care Program, Philippines

Elena is a tribal woman whose marriage was arranged to an older man. She had witnessed the rape of her niece but was too timid to speak up and accuse the rapist in court. Later, she was trained as a village health worker by the Community-Based Primary Health Care Program in the Davao Episcopal Area in the Philippines. With new confidence in herself and with other women health workers to support and encourage her, she became a witness in court. Today, Elena is an articulate woman, a leader in her church, and she is preparing to become a candidate for council head in her tribe. She has faith in God, in herself, and in the support of other women.

2. HIV/AIDS Education Program, United Methodist Church of Kenya

Yema Luhahi (YA-ma Lu-HAH-hee) is a missionary of the General Board of Global Ministries. She is working to stop the HIV/AIDS epidemic that has swept through Africa. Yema works with young men and women who have come to cities to find work and who live in cramped labor camps. She also works with women and children in small communities and with workers who minister to those with sex-related illnesses. Through seminars and workshops, Yema trains local people to care for persons with HIV/AIDS and to work with the patients' families. Public rallies raise awareness of HIV/AIDS prevention. There is also a day-care center for children orphaned by the disease. Yema works with high school students by training peer counselors to educate them about HIV/AIDS. Yema is a woman of strong faith who is working, with our help, to save lives in her country.

3. Bablibai, Community Health and Development Program, Methodist Church of India

Bablibai (Bob-lee-BY) is a member of the Lambadi (Lam-BA-dee) tribe in South India. In spite of living with an abusive husband, Bablibai refuses to be defeated. She is proud

that she has been trained by the Community Health Program to be a traditional birth attendant. In an area with few doctors or hospitals, she helps women deliver healthy babies. Bablibai is also an advocate, speaking to government officials, and rural banks, for the needs of her people. She has been appointed to her village council and although women are expected to be silent, she speaks up. The South India Regional Conference of the Methodist Church of India believes it is critical to empower women like Bablibai. They are instruments of healing where it is desperately needed.

Offering and Closing

Pass out old envelopes -
Hymn: "Jesus' Hands Were Kind Hands," #273, *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Preparation

1. One copy of The Call to Prayer and Self-Denial Sample Packet is sent to each local secretary of program resources in October of each year. It contains one copy of all the items needed for this observance. It also contains an Order Form for additional copies of any item in the Sample Packet. Use the Order Form in the Sample Packet for ordering all additional materials needed for this special Call to Prayer and Self-Denial observance.
2. Order a Prayer Card and Offering Envelope for each member. Allow 6 to 8 weeks for delivery of your order.
3. Several weeks before you hold the Call to Prayer and Self-Denial observance, display a copy or copies of the poster illustrating the theme.
4. Publicize the service in the church newsletter and bulletin.
5. Contact persons to be readers. Ask the treasurer to participate in the service. Encourage leaders to avoid reading their parts from the Program Book. Try putting the words on 3x5 inch cards or making notes on the essence of the statement and using your own words. This allows more eye contact with the audience and is more effective. It will also require practice!
6. For the Bible study, provide enough Bibles, or type out the scripture and make enough copies for each group to have one. For the national and international stories, make copies so that each group can have at least one copy.
7. Set up the worship center.

Treasurer or Leader: The theme of the Call to Prayer and Self-Denial this year is "Health for All." We have heard of health and healing being brought to many of our sisters today. We have also heard of sisters working to bring healing to others. The offering we give today will go to the mission institutions of the General Board of Global Ministries—ones like the community centers, women's residences, and international health projects you've just heard about.

Pass basket - Pray from prayer card
We have just sung "Take my hands, Lord Jesus, let them work for you." Let us use our hands, our prayers and our gifts to make healing possible for those in need.

Hymn: "When Jesus the Healer Passed Through Galilee" (verses 1, 5, 7), #263, *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Resources*

See the Order Form in the Sample Packet for A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial materials for 2004: "Health for All." (Note: shipping and handling costs for these materials vary.)

Prayer Card. (Bilingual Eng./Span. #03383) 12¢ each, 10 or more 8¢ each.

Flyer/Bookmark. Describes purpose and meaning of A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial. (Eng. #02914, Span. #05002) free for postage and handling.

Handbook. See the Introduction, Planning for the Annual Observance, Theme Resources. See the 2004 Sample Packet for a copy of the Handbook. (Eng. #02926, Span. #02931) 75¢.

Packet. (Eng. #03386, Span. #03383) \$1.65.

Poster. (Bilingual Eng./Span. #03384) 50¢. Use

the poster in this program book or in the sample packet.

Offering Envelopes. (Bilingual Eng./Span. #03385) free for postage and handling.

Telling Our Stories (stories of United Methodist national mission institutions). (#02842) \$5.00.

Response Special Issue on Global Health and Christian Response-Ability, April 2001. (#02974) \$1.50.

Response April 2002, "Celebrating New Life," pp. 30-31. (#03198) \$1.50.

Chand, Sarla, Esther Mabry and Dave Hilton. **Abundant Living: Global Health and Christian Response-Ability. Leader's Guide** by Becky Jones. (#02975) \$7.50.



Let us use our hands, our prayers and our gifts to make healing possible for those in need.

*Resources listed with stock numbers are available from the Service Center, General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 7820 Reading Road, Callers No. 1800, Cincinnati, OH 45222-1800. Telephone: 1-800-305-9857; Fax: 1-513-761-3722; E-mail: SCorders@gbgm-umc.org. Prices do not include shipping and handling. See inside back cover for information on how to figure these additional costs.



Photos courtesy of United Methodist Women's units, U.S.A.



Mission is a gift from God, not a task.

Special Program

Pledge Service—Mission in the 21st Century: Peacemakers Responding to God's Grace

by
Sung-ok Lee

Focus Image: Set up a worship table with cloths or decorations of five different colors: red, orange, yellow, green and blue to signify diversity within United Methodist Women, as well as to signify the five channels of undesignated giving. Add a Bible; a globe to represent the world in which we practice our mission; multi-colored origami paper and a few ready-made paper cranes symbolizing peace; two candles, and two baskets to receive the Pledge Cards.

Focus Scripture: Matthew 28:16-20, Luke 8:1-3, Matthew 5:9.

Focus Statement: To respond to God's grace today is to participate in expanding concepts of mission, God's mission. The Mission Today emphasis of United Methodist Women energizes us to be more involved in mission; helps make the connection between mission projects and our undesignated giving; provides mission resources, and expands concepts of mission, including social justice as mission. As witness of peace, hope and reconciliation, through our Undesignated Giving we are enabled to live out the teaching and ministry of Jesus Christ in our communities and throughout the world.

Program

Call to Worship in Unison: Life-giving peace, loving and healing God, in whose grace we are immersed, and by whose grace our souls are stirred, grant that we may be transformed through your Holy Spirit. May we with boldness speak the truth to break the cycle of fear and war in our midst. Lead us to your way of peace. Open us now to receive in this worship your love and strength as we make our pledge to expand our concepts of mission and to understand that social action is a vital part of mission. In Jesus' name we pray as we strive to witness to Jesus Christ, one who can bridge boundaries, be they geographic, racial or cultural. Amen.

Hymn: "What Gift Can We Bring," Stanzas 1 and 2, #87, "Jesu, Jesu," Verses 1, 2 and 3, #432, *The United Methodist Hymnal*.

Scripture: Luke 8:1-3; Matthew 25:40.

Leader: Reads the Focus Statement and then says:

Gracious God, we thank you for United Methodist Women in all the local units. We thank you for our members who are reaching out in your name through *Mission Today*. Amen.

All: Through our faithfulness to God's mission, we are committing ourselves and our gifts to ministries that help relieve suffering and improve the quality of life for women, children and youth.

Hymn: "What Gift Can We Bring," stanzas 3 and 4. "Jesu, Jesu," verses 4 and 5.

A Litany

Leader: Mission is a gift from God, not a task.

All: We have been given this gift, to share in God's mission to the world by witnessing to God's acts in the past and in the present.

Through the Holy Spirit, God directs the mission.

Leader: One way to expand our mission is to join thousands of other religious communities in worship at a Children's Sabbath service to show our commitment to justice for children.

Mom
Reader 1: God has given us the responsibility to care for the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of our children. We can participate in social action for children's rights through the United Methodist Women's Campaign for Children-Phase III, an opportunity to provide for hands-on mission with a focus on advocacy and a special emphasis on public school education in the United States.

All: "Who can look in the face of a child, any child, and not remember that this face is a reminder that God, the Creator, has not despaired of humanity? Whether parent, grandparent, aunt, or simply a responsible adult, each of us is called to give voice to the voiceless in our midst, the children!" (Theresa Hoover *Campaign for Children, UMW - Phase III**)

Leader: Lifting up mission projects and mission workers that we support through our pledge to mission is another focus of Mission Today.

Rena
Reader 2: Ongoing and reoccurring war in the Democratic Republic of Congo and surrounding countries, as well as other regions of the world has disrupted life for hundreds of thousands of women and children. Many children have been separated from their parents, or their parents have been killed by weapons of war, or died from AIDS or other diseases. Young boys are often conscripted into one army or another. These children's education has stopped because of the war. Our pledge to mission has established Nsele Twende, a peace and reconciliation center, to keep young girls off the streets, and to provide a place for young boys as an alternative to the army. Our mission pledge also supports persons who operate the center. (*Committee on International Ministries with Women, Children and Youth.*) Our Regional Missionaries are able to reach

these women, children and youth because of our pledge to mission.

People: We read in the tenth chapter of Mark, verses 15 and 16, "Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." . . . [Jesus] took [the children] up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them." We pledge to learn about and respond to the needs of youth and children here and around the world.

Leader: The Charter for Racial Justice Policies states, in part, "that our strength lies in our racial and cultural diversity and that we must work toward a world in which each person's value is respected and nurtured." Books such as *When Hate Comes to Town*, articles in *Response* magazine, and books from the Reading Program address issues pertaining to the Charter.

Lucille
Reader 3: "If we do not act we shall surely be dragged down the long, dark and shameful corridors of time reserved for those who possess power without compassion, might without morality, and strength without sight. Now let us begin. Now let us rededicate ourselves to the long and bitter but beautiful struggle for a new world. This is the calling of the [children] of God, and our [sisters and brothers] wait eagerly for our response..." Martin Luther King, Jr. (*When Hate Comes to Town*, 3rd Ed., p.11)

All: "We commit ourselves as individuals and as a community to follow Jesus Christ in word and deed and to struggle for the rights and the self-determination of every person and group of persons. Therefore, as United Methodist Women in every place across the land"...we unite our efforts toward racial justice. (*Why Have a Charter for Racial Justice Policies?*)

Leader: Giving is a way for us, as United Methodist Women, to express our faith. It is a privilege, a gift of God's grace.

Reader 4: Two of the Mission Today goals for United Methodist Women are: (1) every member making the Pledge to Mission and (2) each

unit being a Five-Star Unit, contributing to all five channels of Undesignated Giving. Undesignated Giving provides funds which are accessible to ALL mission programs and lets the money flow to all areas and needs rather than just the well-known projects.

All: "As we give, we will remember the bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked child in a day care center; the women singing as they take their buckets of water from the village well; the shelter for abused women and children. And we will ask ourselves, 'When did we give to all of these?' And the answer will come, 'When you gave undesignated funds through United Methodist Women.'" (*Where the Money Goes* Packet, Ruth Daugherty)

Small Group Activity: Peace Cranes for Mission.

Hand out colored origami paper to small groups of 4 or 5 people. Have each person in the group write on the white side of their paper "What it means to be in mission today in this time of war and violence in the world." Ask the question, "What is mission for us who live in the most powerful country in the world?" Give option to share what is written. Have a volunteer demonstrate how to fold a peace crane. Make peace cranes to be placed at the worship center later.

Hymn: "Nurtured by the Spirit," #115, *Global Praise II*.

Responsive Reading: Matthew 28:19-20.

Leader: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,

All: "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Leader: "and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.

All: "And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Leader and All Members: I pledge (*read from the member's Pledge Card*):

my prayers, that I may experience growth and renewal in my relationship to God and to my sisters and brothers;

my time, that I may respond to human need through study, action and reflection;

my gifts, that I may share in the global ministries of the church.

Leader: As you are ready and able, come forward and place your Pledge Card in the basket at the worship center. As you commit yourself to God's mission, think of the ways in which you and your unit can live out the goals of Mission Today through study, prayer and action. You can place your paper crane at the worship center at this time as well.

Hymn: "Here I Am, Lord," #593, *The United Methodist Hymnal*, while cards are being placed in the basket.

All: Creator God, as United Methodist Women, we commit ourselves as individuals and as a community to follow Jesus Christ, in word and in deed, and to carry out your mission for peace and reconciliation among communities in our world and the rights and self-determination of every person through our goals of Mission Today. In the name of Jesus the Christ, we pray. Amen.

Preparation

1. At least six to eight weeks prior to the Pledge Service, order Pledge Cards (Eng. #05513; Span. #05514; Korean #05525) from the Service Center for each member of your unit. Hand a card to each participant as she enters the meeting room. If members cannot be present, plan to mail cards to them.
2. Set up the worship center with cloths or other decorations of different colors (red, orange, yellow, green and blue), a Bible, a globe, offering baskets and two candles. Prepare a packet of origame paper (one side is colored and the other is white) and have volunteers ready to teach paper-crane folding.
3. Make copies of hymns and songs from *The United Methodist Hymnal* and *Global Praise II*. Type information about the source of the material on the bottom of each sheet you copy. Arrange for an accompanist.
4. Select readers and participants for the program and share with them the parts they will read and lead. Note that the source of several of the readings is given. If the entire group is to read the sections titled "All," be sure that all have copies.
5. Arrange chairs in a semicircle so that each person can move from her chair to the worship center easily.

Resources*

Mission: Responding to God's Grace, A Policy Statement on Giving, the Women's Division. (Eng. #02581, Span. #02582, Korean #02583) 50¢.

Response, the magazine for United Methodist Women. Subscriptions, \$12.00 a year (11 issues); \$22.00 for two years. In combination with *New World Outlook*, \$25.00 a year; \$45.00 special two year rate. Order toll free 1-800-218-4014. Fax 1-845-566-7020.

Response, Special Issue: "Mission in the 21st Century" (April 1999). (#02788) \$1.50.

Response, July/August 2002 issue: "United Methodist Women in Mission Today." (#03279) \$1.50.

Teaching Mission in a Global Context, Patricia Lloyd-Sidle and Bonnie Sue Lewis, Editors. (#03369) \$16.95.

Mutuality in Mission, Glory E. Dharmaraj. (#02955) \$10.00.

Campaign for Children, United Methodist Women-Phase III, Public School Education. (#03223) \$10.00.

When Hate Comes to Town: A Handbook of Effective Community Responses. (#01412) \$10.00.

Pledge Card, found in the brochure, *Membership Joys and Responsibilities*. (Eng. #05513, Span. #05514, Korean #05525) free except for postage and handling.

Where the Money Goes, Packet on Finance. (#01371) \$3.85.

Prayer Calendar. 2003 (#03179) \$7.50, 2004 (#03298) \$8.50.

Channels of Undesignated Giving. (Eng. #05717, Span. #05721, Korean #05310) free except for postage and handling.

*Resources listed with stock numbers are available from the Service Center, General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 7820 Reading Road, Callers No. 1800, Cincinnati, OH 45222-1800. Telephone: 1-800-305-9857; Fax: 1-513-761-3722; E-mail: SCorders@gbgm-umc.org. Prices do not include shipping and handling. See inside back cover for information on how to figure these additional costs.

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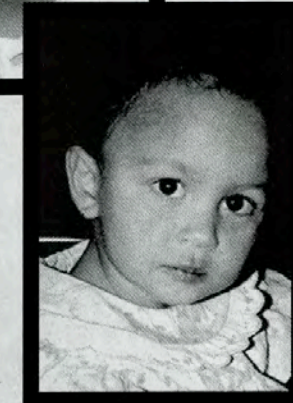
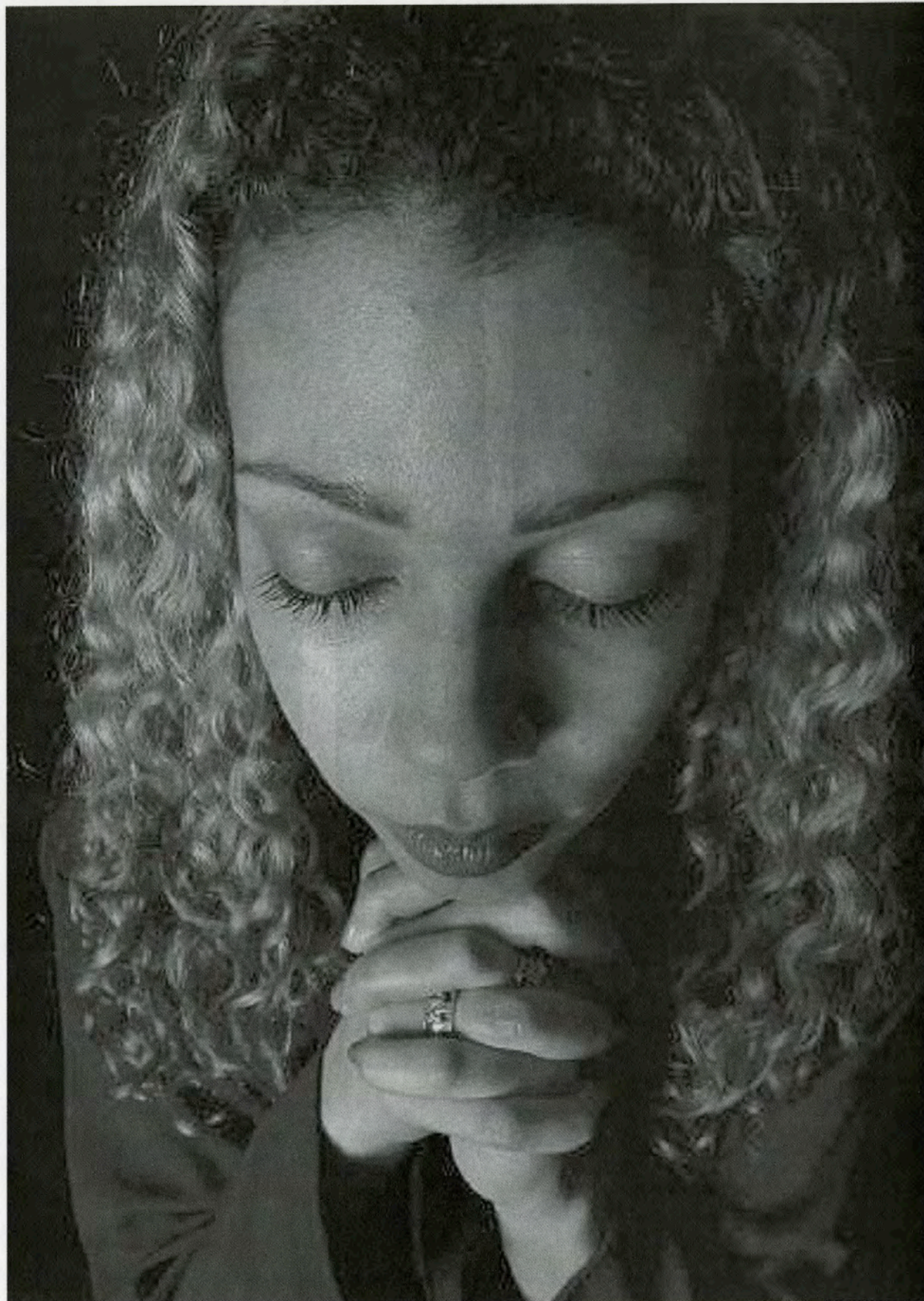


Photo by Nilda Ferrari



Program Planning Form

Today's Date _____ Date of Program _____

Meeting Place _____

Time of Program _____

General Unit Program ☐ yes ☐ no Small Group Program ☐ yes ☐ no

Title of Program _____

General Content of Program _____

Methods (mark all that apply): ☐ name tags ☐ readings ☐ small groups ☐ special speaker
☐ audiovisuals ☐ panel presentation ☐ skit or drama ☐ role play ☐ group singing
☐ posters or pictures ☐ use of chalkboard ☐ newsprint ☐ simulation game ☐ learning center
☐ interview ☐ silent prayer time ☐ spoken prayer time ☐ group discussion
☐ group art project ☐ puzzles or quizzes ☐ evaluation time ☐ refreshments

Scripture References _____

Hymns _____

Worship Center _____

Anticipated Follow-through or Action after the Program _____

Resources from the Service Center (list titles as they apply) _____

Response _____ New World Outlook _____

Prayer Calendar _____ Handbook: Focus on Local and District Units _____

From the Reading Program _____

Names of mission study resources _____

United Methodist Women's resources on giving _____

Annual Report of the Women's Division _____

Poster on the PURPOSE _____

Pledge Card _____

Other Resources _____

Equipment and Supplies (circle what is needed and note quantity)

study books _____ *Response* _____ hymnals _____ Bibles _____

chairs _____ tables _____ pencils/pens _____ paper _____ handouts _____

newsprint _____ markers/crayons _____ chalkboard/chalk _____ tape _____

art supplies _____ cassette player _____ slide or filmstrip _____ projector _____

CD player _____ TV/VCR _____ extension cord _____ coffee/tea pots _____

napkins _____ mugs/glasses/paper cups _____ dishes/paper plates _____

forks, spoons, knives _____

Leadership Responsibilities

Name(s) of person(s) coordinating this program _____

Coordinator's phone number _____

Name(s) of program and worship leaders _____

Name(s) of person(s) responsible for worship center _____

Name(s) of person(s) responsible for setting up _____

Name(s) of person(s) responsible for cleaning up _____

Name of person who will order resources _____

Name(s) of person(s) responsible for contacting special speakers,

musicians, resource persons _____

Other Notes about the Program _____

Who Is My Sister?

Evaluation Form

Please rate each program you used in terms of how well it fulfilled its focus statement.

Program	Excellent	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
1. Sisters on PURPOSE				
2. Soul Knitting				
3. Lent/Easter—The Women Looked on—from a Distance: A Reflection on the Cross				
4. Advent/Christmas—Tell the Coming Generations				
5. Interfaith Study—Faith Communities Living Together				
6 Exodus—Moving Forward				
7. Mexico—Our Sisters to the South				
8. World Thank Offering—Gratitude and Service				
9. Quiet Day Service for a Call to Prayer & Self-Denial—My Healing, My Sister's Healing				
10. Pledge Service—Mission in the 21 st Century: Peacemakers Responding to God's Grace				

How many members are in your local unit? Were these programs used in your general meeting? Small group meetings? Both meetings?

Did you follow in general the suggestions for presentation? Why or why not? If not, what especially effective techniques did you use?

What specific actions or projects grew out of the programs?

Poster on the PURPOSE

Please rate each program you used in terms of how well it fulfilled its focus statement.

Program

What topics would you like to see treated in a future program book?

Study

Study

Study

How could this book be improved?

Study

Study

Study

Study

Study

Study

Study

Study

Study

Study

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Study

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Please mail order and check payable to:

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Is this (check one):

- ☐ An individual evaluation?
- ☐ A corporate report of the unit?
- ☐ A corporate report of the program committee?

PURPOSE

OF UNITED METHODIST WOMEN



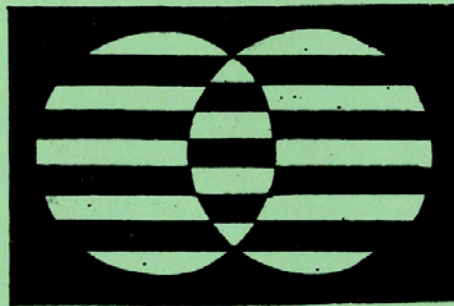
The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose PURPOSE is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

HONORABLE MENTION
RECOGNITION

Presented to

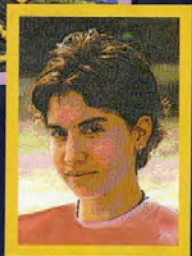
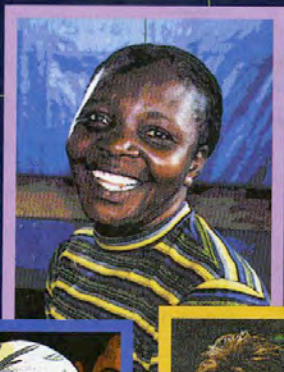
North Ridge United Methodist Women
North Ridge United Methodist Church
of the Batavia District

For Participating In At Least 3 or 4 Channels of
Undesignated Giving in 2003



District Treasurer
District E and I

Rose Marie Morse



MY DATE BOOK

United Methodist Women • 2004

Regular Members

	<u>Phone</u>
Norma Clark	433-5665
Debbie Colaizzi	434-1558
Jean Darnell	751-9187
Carole Doebler	433-5557
Marlene Dinse	751-9033
Anabell Freatman	434-1809
Sue Holmes	791-4638
Rena Israel	751-9094
Nancy Jacobs	434-1895
Sandy Jowdy	434-8417
Audrey Peck	433-7209
Diane Peck	434-7180
Sue Rademacher	751-6209
Karen Randall	439-1865
June Schuman	434-8485
Sue Schuman	751-9884
Lucille Schurr	751-9648
Kim & Troy Sellers	778-0806
Gloria Snyder	434-8980
Lois Ward 9305	751-7372
Ruth Weaver	751-6440
Mary Winquist	438-9352

Kate Park -791-4437

Sellers Home
778-8804

Honorary Members

	<u>Phone</u>
Leetah Brown	
✓ Millie Coulter	731-5694
Shirley Coulter	433-5335
✓ Agnes Drewes	751-0057
Iva Hochadel	754-8637
Ruth Ingram	795-9475
Maureen Israel	
Agnes Lester	751-9014
Gertude Luff	434-8909
✓ Helen Moss	434-8464
Thelma Patterson	
Hope Rick	2063
Miriam Robinson	
✓ Donna Robinson	433-2068
Helen Rodgers	1-2-2004

Church:

3930 N. Ridge Rd. 433-4105

Anabell

MY SISTER?

features 10 programs which to the 2003-2004 Mission PURPOSE of the United es programs on the Spiritual Mission Study, and Mexico, ographic study. Other pro- vent/Christmas, Meditation, Special Service of Call to ervice, and the World Thank an. #03296) \$3.75

Cheryl Hemmerle

ol

n Looked on - from a Dis- e Cross by Sarah Cunningham the Coming Generations by orcas Rodríguez communities Living Together

d by Marian T. Martin he South by Marisa Villarreal on in the 21st Century: to God's Grace by Sung-ok

-Gratitude and Service by

a Call to Prayer and Self- y Sister's Healing by Joyce

WHO IS MY SISTER?**Who is My Sister?**

The 2004 Program Book features 10 programs which are connected not only to the 2003-2004 Mission Studies, but also to the PURPOSE of the United Methodist Women. It features programs on the Spiritual Growth Study, the interfaith Mission Study, and Mexico, in its second year as a geographic study. Other programs focus on Easter, Advent/Christmas, Meditation, Young Women, and the Special Service of Call to Prayer/Quiet Day, Pledge Service, and the World Thank Offering. (Eng. #03295; Span. #03296) \$3.75

Contents—10 Programs

- **Sisters on PURPOSE** by Cheryl Hemmerle
- **Soul Knitting** by Joy Carol
- **Lent/Easter: The Women Looked on - from a Distance: A Reflection on the Cross** by Sarah Cunningham
- **Advent/Christmas: Tell the Coming Generations** by Diana Rodríguez and Dorcas Rodríguez
- **Interfaith Study: Faith Communities Living Together** by Ethel Wolf Born
- **Exodus: Moving Forward** by Marian T. Martin
- **Mexico: Our Sisters to the South** by Marisa Villarreal
- **Pledge Service—Mission in the 21st Century: Peacemakers Responding to God's Grace** by Sung-ok Lee
- **World Thank Offering—Gratitude and Service** by Betty Purkey
- **Quiet Day Service for a Call to Prayer and Self-Denial—My Healing, My Sister's Healing** by Joyce Hamlin

JANUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial
Epiphany, January 6
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
January 18-25

General Meeting

Date Jan 8 Hour 7 p.m.
Place Church
Program Focus Call to prayer & Self Denial
Leaders _____

Hostesses Rena Israel
Ruth Weavers
Amount of Pledge Paid _____

Small Group Meeting

Date _____ Hour _____
Place _____
Program Focus _____
Leaders _____

Hostesses _____

District/Conference Event

Date _____ Hour _____
Place _____

FEBRUARY						
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29						

A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial
Ash Wednesday, February 25

General Meeting

Date Feb 5 Hour 7 p.m.
Place Church
Program Focus Service Project
Leaders _____

Hostesses Mary Jacobs
Rebecca Calaiszi
Amount of Pledge Paid _____

Small Group Meeting

Date _____ Hour _____
Place _____
Program Focus _____
Leaders _____

Hostesses _____

District/Conference Event

Date _____ Hour _____
Place _____

MARCH						
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial
World Day of Prayer, March 5

General Meeting

Date Mar 4 Hour 7 p.m.
Place Church
Program Focus Lenten Service
Leaders Anaell Freeman
Hostesses Vivian Peck
Barbara Doeblen
Amount of Pledge Paid _____

Small Group Meeting

Date _____ Hour _____
Place _____
Program Focus _____
Leaders _____
Hostesses _____

District/Conference Event

Date _____ Hour _____
Place _____

APRIL						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Palm Sunday, April 4
Good Friday, April 9
Easter Sunday, April 11

General Meeting

Date April Hour 7 p.m.
Place Church
Program Focus Pledge Service
Leaders Karen Randall
Hostesses Karen Randall
Audrey Peck, Lucille Schum
Amount of Pledge Paid _____

Small Group Meeting

Date _____ Hour _____
Place _____
Program Focus _____
Leaders _____
Hostesses _____

District/Conference Event

Date _____ Hour _____
Place _____

MAY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

May Friendship Day, May 7
 New Program Book available
 New Spiritual Growth Study available
 New Mission Studies available
 Pentecost, May 30

General Meeting

Date May 6 Hour 7 p.m.
 Place Church
 Program Focus Guest Site & Special
 Leaders Member invite
Nancy Jacobs
 Hostesses Norma Clark, Gloria
Snyder
 Amount of Pledge Paid _____

Small Group Meeting

Date _____ Hour _____
 Place _____
 Program Focus _____
 Leaders _____
 Hostesses _____

District/Conference Event

Date _____ Hour _____
 Place _____

JUNE						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Regional Schools of
 Christian Mission

General Meeting

Date June 3 Hour 6:30 p.m.
 Place _____
 Program Focus Annex out
 Leaders _____
 Hostesses _____
 Amount of Pledge Paid _____

Small Group Meeting

Date _____ Hour _____
 Place _____
 Program Focus _____
 Leaders _____
 Hostesses _____

District/Conference Event

Date _____ Hour _____
 Place _____

JULY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Conference Schools of
Christian Mission

General Meeting

Date _____ Hour _____

Place _____

Program Focus _____

Leaders no meeting

Hostesses _____

Amount of Pledge Paid _____

Small Group Meeting

Date _____ Hour _____

Place _____

Program Focus _____

Leaders _____

Hostesses _____

District/Conference Event

Date _____ Hour _____

Place _____

AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Conference Schools of
Christian Mission

General Meeting

Date _____ Hour _____

Place _____

Program Focus no meeting

Leaders _____

Hostesses _____

Amount of Pledge Paid _____

Small Group Meeting

Date _____ Hour _____

Place _____

Program Focus _____

Leaders _____

Hostesses _____

District/Conference Event

Date _____ Hour _____

Place _____

SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

Conference Schools of
Christian Mission

Sept 2
2 meetings Sept 30

General Meeting

Date Sept 2 Hour 7 p.m.

Place church

Program Focus Speaker

Leaders _____

Hostesses Sue Holmes

Marlene Nino

Amount of Pledge Paid _____

Small Group Meeting

Date _____ Hour _____

Place _____

Program Focus _____

Leaders _____

Hostesses _____

District/Conference Event

Date _____ Hour _____

Place _____

OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Prayer Calendar available
A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial
materials available

General Meeting *Sept 30*

Date Oct 7 Hour 7 p.m.

Place church

Program Focus Bazaar

Leaders _____

Hostesses Jean Darnell

Sue Rademacher

Amount of Pledge Paid _____

Small Group Meeting

Date _____ Hour _____

Place _____

Program Focus _____

Leaders _____

Hostesses _____

District/Conference Event

Date _____ Hour _____

Place _____

NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

World Community Day, November 5
Thanksgiving, November 25
World Thank Offering Observance

General Meeting

Date Nov 4 Hour 7 p.m.

Place Church

Program Focus Thank Offering

Leaders _____

Hostesses Jane Schuman
Conaell Freeman

Amount of Pledge Paid _____

Small Group Meeting

Date _____ Hour _____

Place _____

Program Focus _____

Leaders _____

Hostesses _____

District/Conference Event

Date _____ Hour _____

Place _____

DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Christmas Day, December 25

General Meeting

Date Dec 2 Hour 6:30 pm

Place _____

Program Focus White Gift & Secret

Leaders Sister

Hostesses Sen Schuman
Lois Ward Sandy Jandy

Amount of Pledge Paid _____

Small Group Meeting

Date _____ Hour _____

Place _____

Program Focus _____

Leaders _____

Hostesses _____

District/Conference Event

Date _____ Hour _____

Place _____

Mission Studies 2004

Exodus: The Journey to Freedom

Topic _____ Date _____
Topic _____ Date _____
Topic _____ Date _____
Topic _____ Date _____
Topic _____ Date _____
Topic _____ Date _____

Mexico: Labyrinth of Faith

Topic _____ Date _____
Topic _____ Date _____
Topic _____ Date _____
Topic _____ Date _____
Topic _____ Date _____
Topic _____ Date _____

Creating Interfaith Community

Topic _____ Date _____
Topic _____ Date _____
Topic _____ Date _____
Topic _____ Date _____
Topic _____ Date _____
Topic _____ Date _____

Spiritual Growth Study

Exodus: The Journey to Freedom

by Christine and Bernard Keels with study guide by Loretta Williams, Joseph Agne and J. Ann Craig

This spiritual growth study weaves the story of escape from slavery by the Hebrews into the journey out of slavery by African Americans in Methodist denominations. The accompanying study guide provides Bible study, worship, group exercises and other tools to make this a collective journey so no one is left behind. (Eng. #03282; Span. #03283; Kor. #03284) \$6.00

Exodus: A Path to Freedom Youth Study

by Faye Wilson

This study book is a powerful resource among young people to teach the history while providing tools to avoid, identify and resist the ongoing structures of race by providing experiences through the Bible and spirituals. (#03285) \$4.00

Mexico

Mexico: Labyrinth of Faith

by José Luis Velazco, with Leader's Guide by Virgilio Vásquez-Garza

The author, who lives in Mexico, gives an overview of Mexico's political, cultural and religious history. Text and leader's guide provide group opportunities for discussion of issues facing the church in Mexico and mission opportunities. (Eng. #03181, Span. #03182) \$7.50

Mexico: Labyrinth of Faith

A four-page summary in Korean of the mission study. Also appears in the July/August issue of *United*

Methodists in Service. (Korean #03183) Free for postage and handling

New World Outlook Special Issue on Mexico
May/June 2002 (#03202) \$3.00

Response Issue on Mexico
May 2002 (#03199) \$1.50

Map of Mexico

This full-color map (24" x 36") features geography and places of interest. The reverse includes stories of contemporary Mexicans along with political, economic, and cultural information. (#03187) \$8.95

Children's Materials

Pyramids and Pig Tails

by Faye Wilson (comic book with trading card sheet)

A mission trip near Mexico City introduces young Jenifa to new friends and adventures. Together they learn what it means for church people in two countries to work together. Each comic book includes a sheet of trading cards with information on Mexico's geography, people, and churches. (#03184) \$4.00; 5 for \$15.00; 10 for \$25.00

Pyramids and Pig Tails Teacher's Guide

by Faye Wilson

A variety of activities aimed at children 6-12 explore topics in the comic book. Three sessions are designed for children and one for inter-generational groups. The guide also includes worship, Bible games, songs, and recipes from other times and cultures related to Mexico. (#03185) \$4.00

Audiovisual

Amazon' Mexico CD-ROM

Flip through Jenifa's diary. Play electronic jigsaw puzzles. Click on the Map of Mexico to explore cities and states. Learn Spanish phrases. For use by children and youth and their teachers, at home or in a classroom. It provides links to useful Web sites, and plays on both Windows and Apple. (#03186) \$6.00; 5 for \$25.00

Creating Interfaith Community

Creating Interfaith Community

by Marston Speight with study guide by Jacob and Glory Dharmaraj

This book calls us to create an interfaith community with all people from the many different religious groups in the United States. The study guide offers group activities to help a leader bring this study into our community for action and reflection. (#03286) \$7.50

Creating Interfaith Community

A four-page summary of this mission study in Korean and Spanish from the March/April editions of the *United Methodists in Service* and *El Intérprete*. (Kor. #05599; Span. #05600) Free for postage and handling

Children & Youth Resources

Seven Friends—Seven Faiths

by Martha Bettis Gee

This storybook with photo cubes tells of children of different faiths and how they celebrate their faith. Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, and Baha'i children explain to those of other faiths what their holidays mean. The nine photo cubes, which are a put-together project, illustrate the various faith celebrations. (#03287) \$4.00, 5 for \$15.00, 10 for \$25.00

Seven Friends—Seven Faiths Teacher's Guide

by Martha Bettis Gee

This guide helps children learn about our rich interfaith community by learning about the celebrations of different faiths, including our own. It offers three sessions for children from ages 6 through 12 and an intergenerational experience including games, recipes, and songs. Each session beginning with worship and Bible study has a wide variety of activities for different age levels. (#03288) \$6.00

Who Is That Kid Next Door?

by Kelly C. Martini

Younger Christians are growing up in an increasingly interreligious world going to school and living in communities with others from Hindu, Muslim, Jewish and other faiths, and seeing religious conflicts in the news on a daily basis. They question whether their Christian faith is mature enough to engage in dialogue and live in harmony with those of other faiths. This is a book of stories told by youth from a variety of religious backgrounds about quests for peace and justice in our world through which they learn about each other. These stories will engage youth in discussion of interfaith issues, on personal faith journeys as Christians, and on a quest to live with others in an interreligious community. This resource, including a leader's guide, can be used in classrooms, retreats, or youth group settings. (#03289) \$6.00

Audiovisual

Crossing Borders Video. This 45-minute video introduces the 2003-2004 mission studies which are *Exodus: The Journey to Freedom*; *Mexico: Labyrinth of Faith*; and *Creating Interfaith Community*. A discussion guide is included. (#03290) \$19.95

Local Officers

President Annell Freeman

Address _____

Phone _____

Vice-President Nancy Jacobs

Address _____

Phone _____

Secretary Rebbi Colaianni

Address _____

Phone _____

Treasurer Karen Randall

Address _____

Phone _____

Secretary of Program Resources Gloria Snyder

Address _____

Phone _____

Marlene Denise

Mission Coordinators:**Spiritual Growth**Name Sue Halmer

Address _____

Phone _____

Education and Interpretation

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Social ActionName William Peck

Address _____

Phone _____

Membership Nurture and OutreachName Jane Schuman

Address _____

Phone _____

Committee on NominationsName Ruth Weaver

Address _____

Phone _____

Name Carol Daefler

Address _____

Phone _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Chairpersons of Committees and Sub GroupsName Lorraine Sue Schuman

Address _____

Phone _____

Name Publicity Rena Israce

Address _____

Phone _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Programs and Giving:

Call to Prayer and Self Denial: During this program every one is given a Call to Prayer envelope that we put our offering in and return to our Program leader. As the name implies, the offering is to be a reflection of our self-denial to benefit others. The collection from this offering will be given to a mission selected by the Conference.

Pledge Service: The Pledge Service is a time to pledge our prayers, our time and our gifts for global ministries. Our gifts will help women, children and youth with their needs of food, safety, education, job training and counseling.

Thank Offering: The World Thank Offering is our opportunity to place change in a container each time we feel God's blessing throughout the year. Our offering is presented during our Thank Offering Program in November. This offering will go toward World Mission Programs.

White Gift: Our White Gift is a gift of money wrapped in white paper and presented during our Christmas Program. The collection from this gift will be given to a local mission.

Secret Sister: During our Christmas Program, those who wish to have a Secret Sister will draw a name for the coming year. Through the year cards are to be sent anonymously on Birthday, Anniversary, holidays and any other time you wish to send a card. At our Christmas meeting we present our Secret Sister with a small gift and reveal our name. The gift should be in the range of \$5 - \$10. It's fun trying to keep a secret!

200.00

les

ks

s

40.00

50.00

50.00

175.00

50.00

800.00

15.00

1,380.00

500.00

200.00

145.00

100.00

100.00

75.00

150.00

75.00

35.00

Total Disbursements 1,380.00

2004 Budget

Receipts:

Pledges	200.00
Other Projects:	
Fund Raiser Sales	
Cookbooks	40.00
Dishcloths	50.00
Napkins	50.00
Save-A-Tape	175.00
Upper Rooms	50.00
Craft Sale	800.00
Interest	15.00

Total Receipts 1,380.00

Disbursements:

Church Budget	500.00
Dist. Pledge	200.00
Local Missions	145.00
Resale Items	100.00
Speakers	100.00
Literature	75.00
Donation for Youth	150.00
Unit Exp.	75.00
District Mission	35.00

Total Disbursements 1,380.00

Chlorine Free



A publication of the Women's Division
produced by the General Board of Global Ministries
The United Methodist Church

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